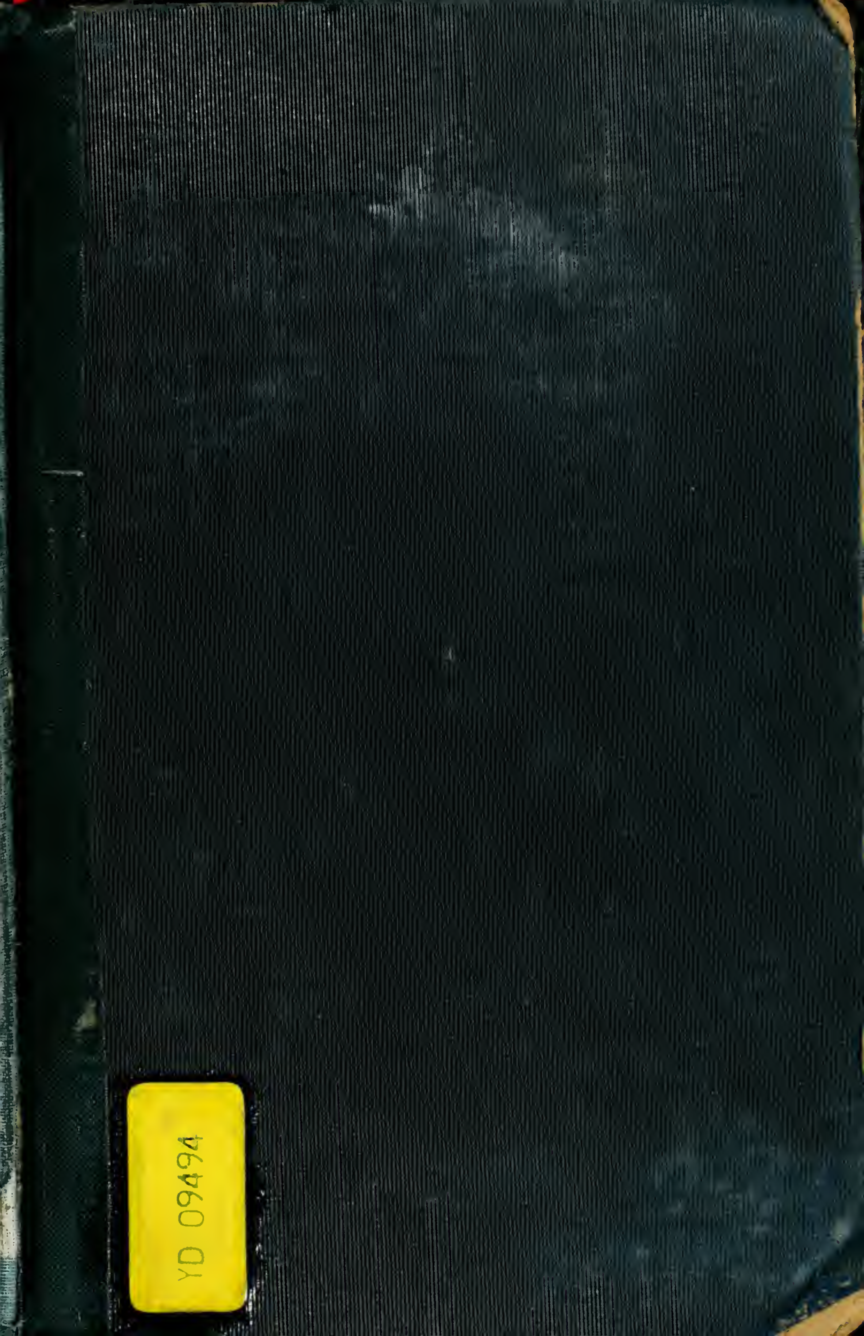
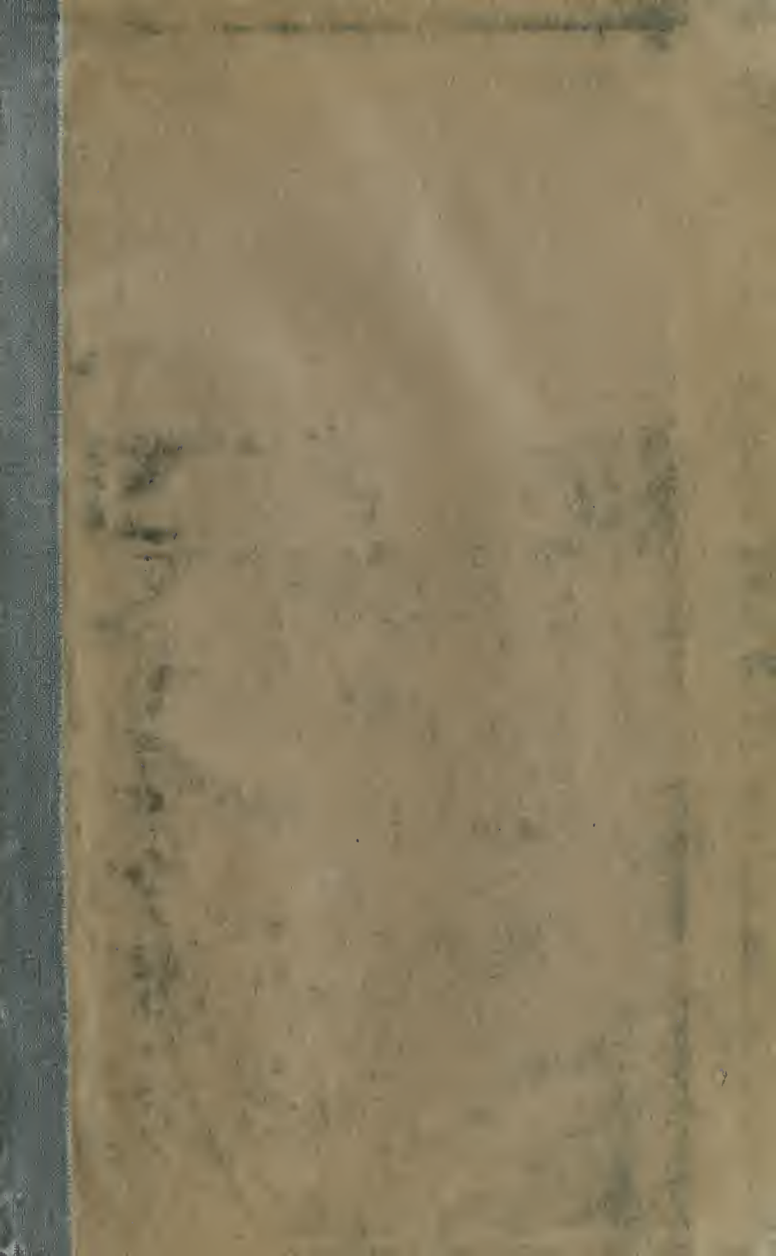
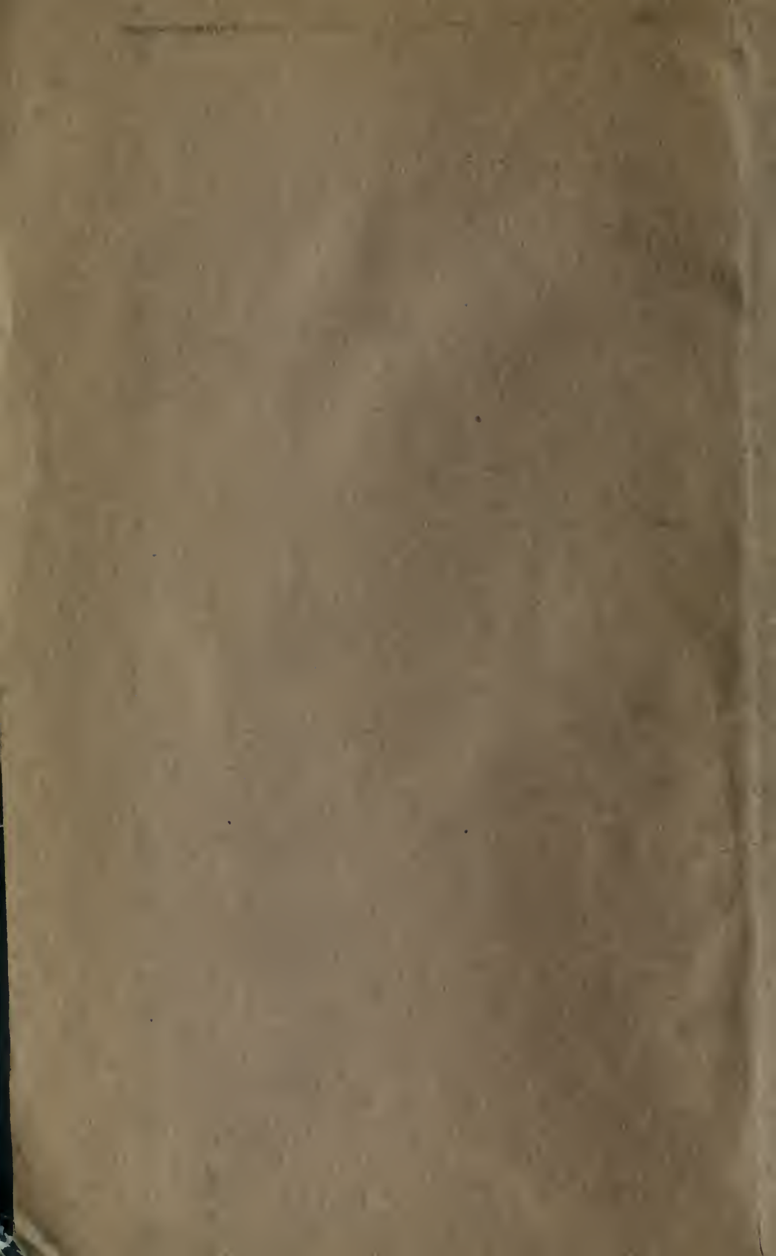
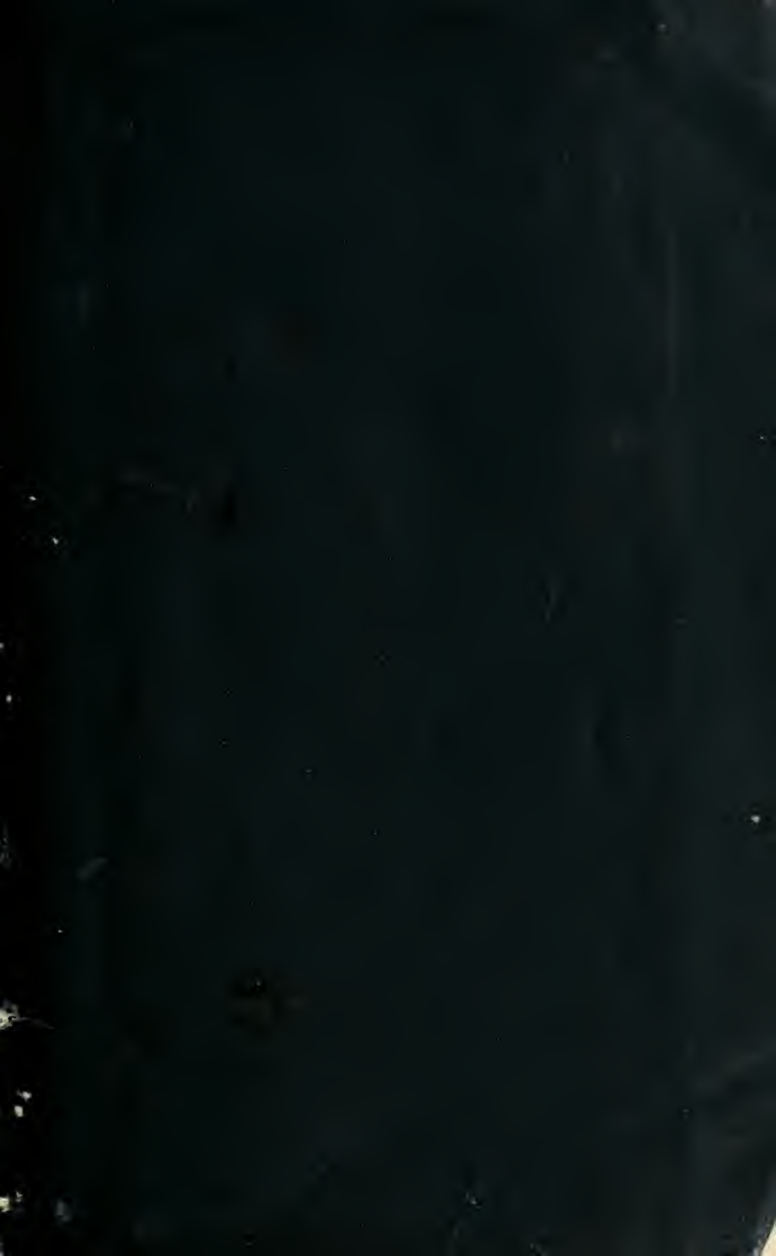










THE HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY OF THE HOLY LAND



THE SEMITIC WORLD

Roman Miles 0 50 100 200 300 400 — English Miles 0 50 100 200 300 400

Fertile Land — Desert — Arid Steppe Land

Phœnician Colonies on Mediterranean underlined in Green

The BABYLONIAN EMPIRE
A C 604 561

The Edinburgh Geographical Institute

J G Bartholomew, F.R.G.S.

London, Hodder and Stoughton

THE HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY OF THE HOLY LAND

ESPECIALLY IN RELATION TO THE HISTORY OF ISRAEL AND OF THE EARLY CHURCH

BY

GEORGE ADAM SMITH, D.D.

PROFESSOR OF HEBREW AND OLD TESTAMENT EXEGESIS
FREE CHURCH COLLEGE, GLASGOW

WITH SIX MAPS

NINTH EDITION

NEW YORK
A. C. ARMSTRONG AND SON
3 AND 5 WEST 18TH STREET
LONDON: HODDER AND STOUGHTON
1902


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15
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F.R.G.S.

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TO

MY FATHER



PREFACE TO THE FOURTH EDITION

To this Edition two new features have been added. One is an Index of Scripture References; the other is a series of Additional Notes. The latter are similar to those published with the Second Edition. They record the more important researches and discoveries in Palestine during the past two years; the changes in the political and social condition of the country; and the recent contributions to the literature of its history and exploration.

In the text of the volume I have made a few alterations in accordance with the suggestions of various scholars who reviewed the First Edition, and even where I have retained my own views on points in dispute I have been careful to record theirs in the Additional Notes. One of the alterations will be found on pp. 634 f., where in face of the arguments of Professor Ramsay and Mr. W. E. Crum—which I have summarised in an Additional Note on p. 680—I have felt obliged to modify the contrast I had drawn between Pagan and Christian epitaphs on the east of Jordan. I have to direct special attention to the Additional Note on Aphek (see p. 675); and to the very valuable account which

Dr. Bailey, late of Nablus, has kindly sent me, of the peculiar virtues of the water of Jacob's Well. This goes far to explain why an artificial well was required and used in a region so rich in open streams. I have printed Dr. Bailey's account as an Additional Note on p. 676.

I have given a number of references to Buhl's important book on *Die Alte Geographie Palästinas*, just published in the series known as *Grundriss der Theol. Wissenschaft.* In the department of the literature of the subject, I have to express my great obligations to Dr. Benzinger's annual records which appear in the *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins.*

GEORGE ADAM SMITH.

GLASGOW, *Nov.* 1896.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

THERE are many ways of writing a geography of Palestine, and of illustrating the History by the Land, but some are wearisome and some are vain. They do not give a vision of the land as a whole, nor help you to hear through it the sound of running history. What is needed by the reader or teacher of the Bible is some idea of the main outlines of Palestine—its shape and disposition ; its plains, passes and mountains ; its rains, winds and temperatures ; its colours, lights and shades. Students of the Bible desire to see a background and to feel an atmosphere—to discover from 'the lie of the land' why the history took certain lines and the prophecy and gospel were expressed in certain styles—to learn what geography has to contribute to questions of Biblical criticism—above all, to discern between what physical nature contributed to the religious development of Israel, and what was the product of purely moral and spiritual forces. On this last point the geography of the Holy Land reaches its highest interest. It is also good to realise the historical influences by which our religion was at first nurtured or exercised, as far as we can do this from the ruins which these have left in the country. To go no further back than the New Testament—there are the Greek art, the Roman rule,

and the industry and pride of Herod. But the remains of Scripture times are not so many as the remains of the centuries since. The Palestine of to-day, as I have said further on, is more a museum of Church history than of the Bible—a museum full of living as well as of ancient specimens of its subject. East of Jordan, in the indestructible basalt of Hauran, there are monuments of the passage from Paganism to Christianity even more numerous and remarkable than the catacombs or earliest Churches of Rome ; there are also what Italy cannot give us—the melancholy wrecks of the passage from Christianity to Mohammedanism. On the west of the Jordan there are the castles and churches of the Crusaders, the impression of their brief kingdom and its ruin. There is the trail of the march and retreat of Napoleon. And, then, after the long silence and crumbling of all things native, there are the living churches of to-day, and the lines of pilgrims coming up to Jerusalem from the four corners of the world.

For a historical geography compassing such a survey, the conditions are to-day three—personal acquaintance with the land ; a study of the exploration, discoveries and decipherments, especially of the last twenty years ; and the employment of the results of Biblical criticism during the same period.

1. The following chapters have been written after two visits to the Holy Land. In the spring of 1880 I made a journey through Judæa, Samaria, Esdraelon, and Galilee :

that was before the great changes which have been produced on many of the most sacred landscapes by European colonists, and by the rivalry in building between the Greek and Latin Churches. Again, in 1891, I was able to extend my knowledge of the country to the Maritime Plain, the Shephelah, the wilderness of Judæa, including Masada and Engedi, the Jordan Valley, Hermon, the Beka‘, and especially to Damascus, Hauran, Gilead, and Moab. Unfortunately—in consequence of taking Druze servants, we were told—we were turned back by the authorities from Boṣra and the Jebel Druz, so that I cannot write from personal acquaintance with those interesting localities, but we spent the more time in the villages of Hauran, and at Gadara, Gerasa and Pella, where we were able to add to the number of discovered inscriptions.

2. With the exception of the results of early geographers, admirably summarised by Reland, the renewal of Syrian travel in the beginning of this century, and the great work of Robinson fifty years ago—the real exploration of Palestine has been achieved during the last twenty years. It has been the work of no one nation ; its effectiveness is due to its thoroughly international character. America gave the pioneers in Robinson, Smith, and Lynch. To Great Britain belong, through the Palestine Exploration Fund—by Wilson, Warren, Drake, Tristram, Conder, Kitchener, Mantell, Black and Armstrong—the splendid results of a trigonometrical survey of all Western, and part of Eastern, Palestine, a geological survey, the excavations at

Jerusalem and Tell el Hesy, very numerous discoveries and identifications, and the earliest summaries of natural history and meteorology. But we cannot forget that this work was prepared for, and has been supplemented in its defects, both by French and Germans. The French have been first in the departments of art and archæology —witness Waddington, Renan, De Vogüé, De Saulcy, Clermont-Ganneau, and Rey. In topography, also, through Guérin and others, the French contributions have been important. To Germany we owe many travels and researches, which, like Wetzstein's, have added to the geography, especially of Eastern Palestine. The Germans have also given what has been too much lacking in Britain, a scientific treatment of the geography in the light of Biblical criticism : in this respect the work of Socin, Guthe, and their colleagues in the Deutsche Palästina-Verein, has been most thorough and full of example to ourselves. The notes in this volume will show how much I have been indebted to material provided by the journals of both the British and German societies, as well as to other works issued under their auspices. I have not been able to use any of the records of the corresponding Russian society. Recent American literature on Palestine is valuable, chiefly for the works of Merrill, and Clay Trumbull.

But the most distinctive feature of the work of the last twenty years has been the aid rendered by the European inhabitants of Syria. Doctors and missionaries, the children of the first German colonists and of the earlier

American missionaries, have grown into a familiarity with the country, which the most expert of foreign explorers cannot hope to rival. Through the British and German societies, Chaplin, Schumacher, Schick, Gatt, Fischer of Sarona, Klein, Hanauer, Baldensperger, Post, West and Bliss have contributed so immense an amount of topographical detail, nomenclature, meteorology and information concerning the social life of the country, that there seems to lie rather a century than a score of years between the present condition of Syriology and that which prevailed when we were wholly dependent on the records of passing travellers and pilgrims.

During recent years a very great deal has been done for the geography of Palestine from the side of Assyrian and Egyptian studies, such as by the younger Delitzsch, Maspero, Sayce, Tomkins, and especially W. Max Müller, whose recent work, *Asien u. Europa nach den alt-ägyptischen Denkmälern*, has so materially altered and increased the Egyptian data. I need not dwell here on the information afforded by the Tell-el-Amarna tablets as to the condition of Palestine before the coming of Israel.

On the Roman and Greek periods there have appeared during recent years the works of Mommsen, Mahaffy, Morrison, Neubauer, Niese's new edition of Josephus, Boettger's topographical Lexicon to Josephus, the collection of Nabatean inscriptions in the *Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum*, and Schürer's monumental *History of the Jewish People in the Time of Christ.* I have constantly

referred to the latter on the Maccabean and Herodian periods; and where I have ventured to differ from his geographical conclusions it has always been with hesitation.

The last fifteen years have also seen the collection and re-publication of the immense pilgrim literature on Palestine, a more thorough research into the Arab geographies, of which Mr. Guy Le Strange's *Palestine under the Moslems* affords the English reader so valuable a summary, and a number of works on the Crusades and the Frank occupation and organisation of Palestine, of which the chief are those of Rey, Röhricht and Prutz. The great French collection of the Historians of the Crusades, begun as far back as 1843, largely falls within this generation.

From one source, which hitherto has been unused, I have derived great help. I mean Napoleon's invasion of Syria and his conduct of modern war upon its ancient battle-fields. It is a great thing to follow Napoleon on the routes taken by Thothmes, Sennacherib, Alexander, Vespasian, and the Crusaders, amidst the same difficulties of forage and locomotion, and against pretty much the same kind of enemies; and I am surprised that no geographer of the country has availed himself of the opportunity which is afforded by the full records of Napoleon's Asiatic campaign, and by the journals of the British officers, attached to the Turkish army which followed up his retreat.

Of all these materials I have made such use as con-

tributed to the aim of this work. I have added very few original topographical suggestions. I have felt that just at present the geographer of Palestine is more usefully employed in reducing than in adding to the identifications of sites. In Britain our surveyors have been tempted to serious over-identification, perhaps by the zeal of a portion of the religious public, which subscribes to exploration according to the number of immediate results. In Germany, where they scorn us for this, the same temptation has been felt, though from other causes, and the Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins has almost as many rash proposals as the Quarterly Statement, and Old and New Testament Maps, of the Palestine Exploration Fund. I have, therefore, ignored a number of identifications and contested a number more. If the following pages leave the reader with many problems stated rather than solved, this has been done of purpose. The work of explorers and critics has secured an enormous number of results which cannot be reasonably doubted. But in many other cases what has been achieved is simply the collection of all the evidence that exists above-ground—evidence which is conflicting, and can be settled only by such further excavations as Messrs. Flinders Petrie and Bliss have so happily inaugurated at Tell-el-Hesy. The exploration, of Western Palestine at least, is almost exhausted on the surface, but there is a great future for it under-ground. We have run most of the questions to earth : it only remains to dig them up.

3. But an equally strong reason for the appearance at this time of a Historical Geography of Palestine is the recent progress of Biblical Criticism. The relation of the geographical materials at our disposal, and the methods of historical reconstruction, have been wholly altered by Old Testament science, since, for instance, Dean Stanley wrote his *Sinai and Palestine.* That part of criticism which consists of the distinction and appreciation of the various documents, of which the Books of Scripture are composed, has especially contributed to the elucidation and arrangement of geographical details in the history of Israel, which without it had been left by archæology in obscurity. I heartily agree with most of what is said on the duty of regulating the literary criticism of the Bible by the archæology of Syria and the neighbouring countries, but we must remember there is a converse duty as well. We have had too many instances of the embarrassment and confusion into which archæology and geography lead us, apart from the new methods of Biblical Criticism. And to those among us who are distrustful of the latter, I would venture to say that there is no sphere in which the helpfulness of recent criticism, in removing difficulties and explaining contradictions, has been more apparent than in the sphere of Biblical Geography. In this volume I have felt forced by geographical evidence to contest some of the textual and historical conclusions of recent critics, both in this country and in Germany, but I have fully accepted the critical methods, and I believe this to be the first geo-

graphy of the Holy Land in which they are employed. In fact, at this time of day, it would be simply futile to think of writing the geography of Palestine on any other principles.

It is as a provisional attempt to collect old and new material from all these sources that I offer the following pages. I have not aimed at exhausting the details of the subject, but I have tried to lay down what seem to me the best lines both for the arrangement of what has been already acquired, and for the fitting on to it of what may still be discovered. There are a few omissions which the reader will notice. I have entirely excluded the topography of Jerusalem, the geography of Phœnicia, and the geography of Lebanon. This has been because I have never visited Phœnicia, because Lebanon lies properly outside the Holy Land, and because an adequate topography of Jerusalem, while not contributing to the general aim of the volume, would have unduly increased the size of a work which is already too great. I was anxious to give as much space as possible to Eastern Palestine, of which we have had hitherto no complete geography.

Portions of Chapters VII, VIII, XII-XIV, and XX, most of Chapters X, XV-XVII, XIX, and XXI, and all Chapter XVIII, have already appeared in *The Expositor* for 1892-93.

With regard to maps, this volume has been written with the use of what must be for a long time the finest illustration of the geography of Palestine—the English

Survey Maps, both the large map of Western Palestine, on the scale of an inch to the mile, and the reduced map of all Palestine on the scale of three-eighths of an inch to the mile. The latter, in its editions of 1891 ff., though overcrowded by 'identifications,' is by far the most useful map ever published for students or travellers : one might call it indispensable. Mr. Armstrong has lately put this map into relief ; the result is a most correct, clear and impressive reproduction of the shape and physical varieties of the land. If students desire a cheap small map, brought down to date, they will find it in Fischer and Guthe's admirable map of Palestine, published by the German society.

The six maps for this volume have been specially prepared by the eminent cartographer, Mr. John George Bartholomew, of Edinburgh, and my hearty thanks are due to him for the care and impressiveness with which he has produced them. The large map and the three sectional ones (the latter on the scale of four miles to an inch) have this distinction, that they are the first orographical maps of Palestine, representing the whole lie and lift of the land by gradations of colour. The little sketch-map on p. 51 is to illustrate the chapter on the form and divisions of the land : while the map of the Semitic World has been prepared, under my directions, to illustrate Syria's place in history, and her influence westwards. Through the courtesy of the engineers, Mr. Bartholomew has been able to indicate the line of the new Acca-Damascus Railway.

During my work on this volume, I have keenly felt the want, in English, of a good historical atlas of the Holy Land. I have designed one such, containing from thirty to forty maps, and covering the history of Syria from the earliest epochs to the Crusades and the present century; and preparations are being made by Mr. Bartholomew and myself for its publication by Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton.

In conclusion, I have to thank, for help rendered me at various times, both in travel and in study, Dr. Selah Merrill; Rev. W. Ewing, late of Tiberias, whose collection of inscriptions is promised by the Exploration Fund; Dr. Mackinnon and Rev. Stewart Crawford of Damascus; Rev. Henry Sykes of the Church Missionary Society at Es-Salt; Rev. C. A. Scott of Willesden; and Professors Ramsay and Kennedy of Aberdeen. I have been greatly assisted by two collections of works on the Holy Land: that made by Tischendorf, now in possession of the Free Church College, Glasgow; and that made by the late Mr. M'Grigor of Glasgow, now in the Library of Glasgow University.

My wife has revised all the proofs of this volume, and, with a friend, prepared the Index.

GEORGE ADAM SMITH.

28th April 1894.



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CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

Event		B.C.
Entrance of Israel into Palestine,	*circa*	1300
Deborah and her Song, Gideon,	*before*	1100
Saul anointed,	*circa*	1075
David, King,	"	1030
Solomon, King,	"	1000
Disruption of the Kingdom and invasion by Shishak,	"	970
Elijah,	"	870
Israel comes into touch with Assyria: Battle of Karkar,		854
Elisha,		850-800
First Writing Prophets: Amos, Hosea,	*circa*	750
Isaiah — Uzziah dies,		740
Isaiah — Northern Israel falls,		721
Isaiah — Deliverance of Jerusalem,		701
Jeremiah — Discovery of Book of Law,		621
Jeremiah — Death of Josiah at Megiddo,		608
Jeremiah — Fall of Assyria: Rise of Babylonia,		606
Jeremiah, Ezekiel — First Great Captivity of Jerusalem,		597
Jeremiah, Ezekiel — Second " " "		587
Second Isaiah — Fall of Babylonia: Rise of Persia,		538
Second Isaiah — Return of Jews from exile,		536
Second Isaiah — Temple Rebuilt,		515
Ezra and Nehemiah,		457-440
Erection of Temple on Gerizim,		360
Alexander the Great in Syria,		332
Beginning of Seleucid Era,		312
Kingdom of Parthia founded,		250
Rome defeats Antiochus the Great at Magnesia,		192

Event	Date
	B.C.
The Maccabees,	166-135
John Hyrcanus,	135-105
Alexander Janneus,	104-78
Arrival of Pompey : Roman Province of Syria,	64
Parthians invade Syria,	40
Battle of Actium,	31
Herod the Great,	37-4
His kingdom divided among Archelaus, Herod Antipas, and Philip,	4
	A.D.
Archelaus banished : Judæa under Roman Procurator,	6
Death of Philip,	34
Banishment of Antipas,	39
Agrippa I.,	37-44
Agrippa II.,	50-100
Jewish Rebellion against Rome,	66
Siege of Jerusalem,	70
Formation of Roman Province of Arabia by Trajan,	106
Final overthrow of the Jews under Bar Cochba by Hadrian,	135
Origen in Palestine, *circa*	218
Decian Persecution, "	250
Diocletian's Persecution, *on from*	303
Eusebius, Archbishop of Cæsarea,	315-318
Constantine the Great,	323-336
Final overthrow of Paganism in Palestine, *circa*	400
The Hejra	622
Death of Mohammed,	632
Moslem conquest of Syria,	634-638
Omeyyade Khalifs make Damascus their capital,	661
Invasion of Seljuk Turks,	1070-1085
First Crusade and Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem,	1098-1187
Battle of Hattin won by Saladin,	1187
Third Crusade, Richard of England,	1191
Sultan Bibars, and overthrow of the Franks, *circa*	1270
Mongol Invasions, the last by Timur,	1240, 1260, 1400
Napoleon in Syria,	1799

ABBREVIATIONS

Baudissin, *Stud.* = *Studien zur Semitischen Religionsgeschichte.*

Boha-ed-Din, *Vit Sal.*, *ed. Schult* = *Vita Saladinis*, with excerpts from the geography of Abulfeda, ed. Schultens. See p. 17, n. 2.

Budde, *Ri. u. Sa.* or *Richt. Sam.* = *Die Bücher Richter u. Samuelis.*

C.I.S. = *Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum*, cf. p. 15, n. 1.

Conder, *T. W.* = *Tent Work in Palestine.*

De Saulcy, *Num. de la T.S.* = *Numismatique de la Terre Sainte.*

Geog. Gr. Min. = *Geographi Graeci Minores*, edd. Hudson and Müller. See p. 16.

Hend. *Pal.* = *The Historical Geography of Palestine*, by Rev. A. Henderson, D.D. 2d ed. In 'Handbooks for Bible Classes.' Clark, Edinburgh.

Josephus, *Antt.* = *Antiquities.*

,, *Wars* = *Wars of the Jews.*

K.A.T. = Schrader's *Keilinschriften u. das Alte Testament.*

Neubauer, *Géog. Tal.* = *La Géographie du Talmud*, Paris, 1868.

P.E.F. Mem. = *Memoirs of the Palestine Exploration Fund.*

P.E.F.Q. = *Quarterly Statement of Palestine Exploration Fund.*

P.E.F. Red. Map = *Reduced Map of Palestine Exploration Fund*, edd. 1890 f.

P.P.T. = Palestine Pilgrims Text Society's Series of Publications.

Robertson Smith, *O.T.J.C.* = *Old Testament in the Jewish Church*, ed. 2, 1892.

Robinson, *B.R.* or *Bib. Res.* = *Biblical Researches*, London, 1841.

,, *L.R.* = *Later Researches*, London, 1852.

Siegfried-Stade = Siegfried and Stade's *Handwörterbuch.*

Stade, *G.V.I.* or *Gesch.* = *Geschichte des Volkes Israel.*

Wadd. = Le Bas and Waddington, *Inscriptions Grecques et Latines recuillies en Grèce et en Asie Mineure.* See p. 15, n. 1.

Wetz. = *Wetzstein.*

Z.A.T.W. = *Zeitschrift für Alt-testamentliche Wissenschaft.*

Z.D.M.G. = *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft.*

Z.D.P.V. = *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins.*

M.u.N.D.P.V. = *Mittheilungen und Nachrichten des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins.*

In the transliteration of Hebrew and Arabic words *'Aleph* is usually rendered by a light, *'Ayin* by a rough, breathing; but in well-known names they are sometimes omitted; *Qoph* by *Ḳ*; *Ṣade* usually by *Ṣ*.

In ancient names *Gimel* is rendered by *G* (hard), in modern names by *J*.



BOOK I

THE LAND AS A WHOLE

CHAPTER I

THE PLACE OF SYRIA IN THE WORLD'S HISTORY

For this chapter consult Map II

THE PLACE OF SYRIA IN THE WORLD'S HISTORY

BETWEEN the Arabian Desert and the eastern coast of the Levant there stretches—along almost the full extent of the latter, or for nearly 400 miles—a tract of fertile land varying from 70 to 100 miles in breadth. This is so broken up by mountain range and valley, that it has never all been brought under one native government; yet its well-defined boundaries—the sea on the west, Mount Taurus on the north, and the desert to east and south—give it a certain unity, and separate it from the rest of the world. It has rightly, therefore, been covered by one name, Syria. Like that of Palestine, the name is due to the Greeks, but by a reverse process. As 'Palestina,' which is really Philistina, was first the name of only a part of the coast, and thence spread inland to the desert,[1] so Syria, which is a shorter form of Assyria, was originally applied by the Greeks to the whole of the Assyrian Empire from the Caucasus to the Levant, then shrank to this side of the Euphrates, and finally within the limits drawn above. The Arabs call the country Esh-Sham, or 'The Left,' for it is really the northern or north-western end of the great Arabian Peninsula, of

The Names of the Land.

[1] See p. 4.

which they call the southern side El Yemen, or 'The Right.'[1]

The name Palaistiné, which Josephus himself uses only of Philistia, was employed by the Greeks to distinguish all Southern Syria, inclusive of Judæa, from Phœnicia and Cœle-Syria. They called it Syria Palaistiné, using the word as an adjective, and then Palaistiné, the noun alone. From this the Romans got their Palestina, which in the second century was a separate province, and later on divided into Palestina Prima, Secunda, Tertia. It still survives in the name of the Arab *gund* or canton—Filistin.[2]

These were foreign names: the much older and native name Canaan is of doubtful origin, perhaps racial, but

[1] Syria, as a modern geographical term, is to be distinguished from the *Syria* and *Syrians* of the English version of the Old Testament. The Hebrew of these terms is *Aram*, *Arameans*, a northern Semitic people who dwelt in Mesopotamia, Aram-Naharaim, and west of the Euphrates—as far west as the Phœnician coast, and south to Damascus. Some, however, hold that Aram-Naharaim was on this side the Euphrates. The Roman Province of Syria extended from the Euphrates to Egypt. Its eastern boundary was a line from the head of the Gulf of Suez past the south-eastern end of the Dead Sea, the east of Gilead and the Hauran and Palmyra, to the Euphrates. East of this line was Arabia (see chap. xxv.).

[2] The full history of the word is this:—Philistines, פלשתים or פלשתיים is rendered by the LXX. in the Hexateuch *φυλιστιείμ*; cf. 1 Macc. iii. 24, Sirach xlvi. 18. From this Josephus has the adjective *φυλιστῖνος*, i. *Antt.* vi. 2. But his usual form is *παλαιστῖνος*. He also knows the noun Η Παλαιστίνη, and uses it himself of Philistia, xiii. *Antt.* v. 10: 'Simeon traversed Judah *καὶ τὴν* Παλαιστίνην up to Askalon.' Cf. i. *Antt.* vi. 2: 'The country from Gaza to Egypt . . . the Greeks call part of that country Palestine.' But in *Contra Apion*, i. 22, he quotes Herodotus as using the name in the wider sense inclusive of Judæa. Herodotus, who describes Syria as extending from Cilicia to Mount Carius, distinguishes the Phœnicians from the *Σύριοι οἱ ἐν τῇ* Παλαιστίνῃ, or *οἱ* Παλαιστίνοι *καλεόμενοι* (ii. 104; iii. 5, 91; vii. 89), and defines it as *τῆς Συρίης τοῦτο τὸ χωρίον καὶ τὸ μέχρι* Αἰγύπτου *πᾶν* Παλαιστίνη *καλεῖται*. Arrian (*Anabasis*, ii. 25) speaks of *ἡ Σύριη* Παλαιστίνη. Syria was divided into S. Palestina, S. Punica, and S. Cœla; Herod. i. 105. Palestine was made a separate province, 67 A.D.

more probably geographical and meaning 'sunken' or 'low' land. It seems to have at first belonged to the Phœnician coast as distinguished from the hills above. But thence it extended to other lowlands—Sharon, the Jordan valley, and so over the whole country, mountain as well as plain.[1]

Summary of the Historical Geography of Syria.

The historical geography of Syria, so far as her relations with the rest of the world are concerned, may be summed up in a paragraph. Syria is the northern and most fertile end of the great Semitic home—the peninsula of Arabia. But the Semitic home is distinguished by its central position in geography—between Asia and Africa, and between the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean, which is Europe; and the *rôle* in history of the Semitic race has been also intermediary. The Semites have been the great middlemen of the world. Not second-rate in war, they have risen to the first rank in commerce and religion. They have been the carriers between East and West, they have stood between the great ancient civilisations and those which go to make up the modern world; while by a higher gift, for which their conditions neither in place nor in time fully account, they have been mediary between God and man, and proved the religious teachers of the world, through whom have come its three highest faiths, its only universal religions. Syria's history is her

[1] Land of Canaan is applied in the Tell-el-Amarna Correspondence of the 14th cent. B.C. (Tab., Berlin, 92) to the Phœnician coast, and later by Egyptians to all W. Syria. Acc. to Jos. xi. 3, there were Canaanites east and west of the land; acc. to Jud. i. 9, all over, in the Mount, Negeb, and Shephelah and (ver. 10) in Hebron. It was the spread of the Canaanites that spread the name. In Isa. xix. 18, *the lip of Canaan* is the one language spoken in Palestine, of which Phœnician, Hebrew, Moabite, etc., were only dialects. In Zech. xiv. 21, probably Canaanite = Phœnician = merchant.

share in this great function of intermedium, which has endured from the earliest times to the present day.

To put it more particularly, Syria lies between two continents—Asia and Africa; between two primeval homes of men—the valleys of the Euphrates and the Nile; between two great centres of empire—Western Asia and Egypt: between all these, representing the Eastern and ancient world, and the Mediterranean, which is the gateway to the Western and modern world. Syria has been likened to a bridge between Asia and Africa—a bridge with the desert on one side and the sea upon the other; and, in truth, all the great invasions of Syria, with two exceptions, have been delivered across her northern and southern ends. But these two exceptions—the invasions of Israel and Islam—prove the insufficiency of the bridge simile, not only because they were but the highest waves of an almost constant tide of immigration which has flowed upon Syria from Arabia, but because they represent that gift of religion to her, which in its influence on her history far exceeds the influence of her central position. Syria is not only the bridge between Asia and Africa: she is the refuge of the drifting populations of Arabia. She has been not only the highroad of civilisations and the battle-field of empires, but the pasture and the school of innumerable little tribes. She has been not merely an open channel of war and commerce for nearly the whole world, but the vantage-ground and opportunity of the world's highest religions. In this strange mingling of bridge and harbour, of highroad and field, of battle-ground and sanctuary, of seclusion and opportunity—rendered possible through the striking division of her surface into mountain and plain—lies all the secret of Syria's

history, under the religion which has lifted her fame to glory. As to her western boundary, no invasion, save of hope, ever came over that. Even when the nations of Europe sought Palestine, their armies did not enter by her harbours till the coast was already in their possession. But across this coast she felt from the first her future to lie ; her expectation went over the sea to isles and mainlands far beyond her horizon ; and it was into the West that her spiritual empire—almost the only empire Syria ever knew—advanced upon its most glorious course.

In all this there are four chief factors of which it will be well for us to have some simple outline before we go into details. These are—Syria's Relations to Arabia, from which she drew her population ; her position as Debateable Ground between Asia and Africa, as well as between both of these and Europe ; her Influence Westwards ; her Religion. These outlines will be brief. They are meant merely to introduce the reader to the extent and the interest of the historical geography which he is beginning, as well as to indicate our chief authorities.

I. The Relation of Syria to Arabia.

We have seen that Syria is the north end of the Arabian world, that great parallelogram which is bounded by the Levant with Mount Taurus, the Euphrates with the Persian Gulf, the Indian Ocean, and the Red Sea with the Isthmus of Suez. Within these limits there is a wonderful uniformity of nature : the mass of the territory is high, barren table-land, but dotted by oases of great fertility, and surrounded by a lower level, most of which is also

fertile.[1] The population is all Semitic. It is very numerous for so bare a land, and hardy and reproductive. But it is broken up into small tribes, with no very definite territories. These tribes have gone forth united as a nation only at one period in their history, and that was the day of Islam, when their dominion extended from India to the Atlantic. At all other times they have advanced separately, either by single tribes or a few tribes together. Their outgoings were four—across the Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb into Ethiopia, across the Isthmus of Suez into Egypt, across the Euphrates into Mesopotamia, across the Jordan into Western Syria. Of these, Syria became the most common receptacle of the Arabian drift. She lay, so to speak, broadside-on to the desert; part of her was spread east of the Jordan, rolling off undefended into the desert steppes ; she was seldom protected by a strong government, like Egypt and Mesopotamia; and so in early times she received not only the direct tides of the desert, but the backwash from these harbours as well. Of this the Hebrews were an instance, who came over to her, first from Mesopotamia and then from Egypt. The loose humanity of the Semitic world has, therefore, been constantly beating upon Syria, and almost as constantly breaking into her. Of the tribes who crossed her border, some flowed in from the neighbourhood only for summer, and ebbed again with autumn, like the Midianites in Gideon's day, or the various clans of the 'Aneezeh in our own. But

The Arabian Immigrations.

[1] The coast of the Indian Ocean open to the monsoons, with part of the coasts of the Red Sea and Persian Gulf, Syria, the slopes of Taurus, and the Euphrates valley, are fertile. The rest of the Persian Gulf and Red Sea coasts, the Isthmus of Suez, and forty miles of the coast of the Levant, are desert.

others came up out of the centre or from the south of Arabia—like the Beni Jafn, for instance, who migrated all the way from Yemen in the first Christian century, and, being made by the Romans wardens of the eastern marches of the Empire, founded in time a great dynasty —the Ghassanides. And others came because they had been crowded or driven out of the Nile or the Euphrates valley, like the Syrians, the Philistines, and the Children of Israel.

Thus Syria was peopled. Whenever history lights up her borders we see the same process at work: when Israel crosses the Jordan; when the Midianites follow and oppress her; when, the Jews being in exile, the Idumeans come up on their seats; when the Decapolis is formed as a Greek league to keep the Arabs out; when the Romans, with their wonderful policy, enrol some of the immigrants to hold the others in check; especially at the Moslem invasion; but also during the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem, when various nomadic tribes roaming certain regions with their tents are assigned to the Crown or to different Orders of Chivalry;[1] and even to-day, when parts of the Survey Map of Palestine are crossed by the names of the Beni Sab, the Beni Humâr, the 'Arab-el-'Amarîn, and so forth, just as the map of ancient Palestine is distributed among the B'ne Naphtali, the B'ne Jôseph, the B'ne Jehudah, and other clans of Israel. All these, ancient and modern, have been members of the same Semitic race. Some of them have carried Syria by sudden war; others have ranged for a long time up and down the

Their Ceaselessness.

[1] Prutz, *Z.D.P.V.*, x. 192, mentions so many 'tents' or 'tribes' as assigned to the Order of St. John, and argues that the rest belonged to the king.

Syrian border, or settled peacefully on the more neglected parts of the land, till gradually they were weaned from their pastoral habits, and drawn in among the agricultural population. To-day you do not see new tribes coming up from the centre or other end of Arabia to invade Syria; but you do see a powerful tribe like the Ruwalla, for instance, ranging every year between the Euphrates and the Jordan; or smaller clans like the Ta'amirah of the Judæan wilderness, or the 'Adwân of Moab, after living for centuries by extorting blackmail from the *fellahin*, gradually themselves take to agriculture, and submit to the settled government of the country.[1]

From all this have ensued two consequences:—

Syria's Population tribal

First. The fact that by far the strongest immigration into Syria has been of a race composed of small independent tribes, both suits and exaggerates the tendencies of the land itself. Syria, as we shall see in the next chapter, is broken up into a number of petty provinces, as separated by desert and mountain as some of the Swiss cantons are by the Alps. These little clans, which swarmed out of Arabia, fitted the little shelves and corners of Syria, so that Syria was tribal both by her form and by the character of her population. It is partly this, and partly her position between great and hostile races, which have disabled her from political empire.

and Semitic.

Second. The population of Syria has always been essentially Semitic. There are few lands into which so many divers races have come: as in ancient times Philistines and Hittites; then in very large numbers, Greeks; then with the Crusades a few hundred thousands of Franks; then till the present day more

[1] For the present successful policy of the Turks in this, see ch. xxiv.

Franks, more Greeks, Turks, Kurds, and some colonies of Circassians. But all these have scarcely even been grafted on the stock;[1] and the stock is Semitic. The Greek has been the one possible rival of the Semite; but Greeks have inhabited only cities, where the death-rate exceeds the birth-rate, and, were they not renewed from abroad, they would disappear in the general mass of the Arab or Syrian population.[2]

II. SYRIA'S RELATION TO THE THREE CONTINENTS.

When the Arabian tribes came up from their desert into Syria, they found themselves on the edge of a great highroad and looking across a sea. The highroad is that between Asia and Africa; the sea is that which leads from the East to Europe. From one of the most remote positions on the earth they were plunged into the midst of the world's commerce and war. While this prevented them from consolidating into an empire of their own, it proved the opportunity and development of the marvellous gifts which they brought with them from their age-long seclusion in the desert.

Syria's position between two of the oldest homes of the

[1] In face of the fair hair and blue eyes you often meet in Bethlehem and in the Lebanon, it is too much to say with Socin (Art. 'Syria,' *Encyc. Brit.*) 'that *every* trace of the presence of Greeks, Romans, and Franks has completely disappeared.'

[2] 'In Eastern cities the death-rate habitually exceeds the birth-rate, and the urban population is maintained only by constant recruital from the country, so that it is the blood of the peasantry which ultimately determines the type of the population. Thus it is to be explained that after the Arab conquest of Syria the Greek element in the population rapidly disappeared. Indeed, one of the most palpable proofs that the populations of all the old Semitic lands possessed a remarkable homogeneity of character is the fact that in them, and in them alone, the Arabs and Arab influence took permanent root.'—Robertson Smith, *Religion of the Semites*, 12, 13.

human race made her the passage for the earliest intercourse and exchanges of civilisation. There is probably no older road in all the world than that which is still used by caravans from the Euphrates to the Nile, through Damascus, Galilee, Esdraelon, the Maritime Plain, and Gaza. It is doubtful whether history has to record any great campaigns—as distinguished from tribal wars—earlier than those which Egypt and Assyria waged against each other across the whole extent of Syria, and continued to wage down to the sixth century before Christ. But more distant powers than these broke across this land from both Asia and Africa. The Hittites came south from Asia Minor over Mount Taurus, and the Ethiopians came north from their conquest of the Nile.[1] Towards the end of the great duel between Assyria and Egypt, the Scythians from north of the Caucasus devastated Syria.[2] When the Babylonian Empire fell, the Persians made her a province of their empire, and marched across her to Egypt. At the beginning of our era, she was overrun by the Parthians.[3] The Persians invaded her a second time,[4] just before the Moslem invasion of the seventh century; she fell, of course, under the Seljuk Turks in the eleventh;[5] and in the thirteenth and fourteenth the Mongols thrice swept through her.[6]

Between Asia and Africa.

Into this almost constant stream of empires and races, which swept through Syria from the earliest ages, Europe

[1] 2 Chron. xiv. 9.

[2] Alluded to Zeph. ii.; Jer. i. 14 ff. Cf. Herodotus i. 104 ff.

[3] 40 B.C. [4] 612-616 A.D., under Chosroes II. [5] 1070-1085.

[6] In 1240 Syrians and Crusaders stood together to beat back the Kharesmians; a second Mongol invasion took place in 1260, and a third in 1400 under Timur, which repeated the exportations of early Assyrian days, and carried off the effective classes of Damascus and other towns to Samarcand.

was drawn under Alexander the Great; and now that the West began to invade the East, Syria was found to be as central between them as between Asia and Africa. She was Alexander's pathway to Egypt, 332 B.C. She was scoured during the following centuries by the wars of the Seleucids and Ptolemies, and her plains were planted all over by their essentially Greek civilisation. Pompey brought her under the Roman Empire, B.C. 65, and in this she remained till the Arabs took her, 634 A.D. The Crusaders held her for a century, 1098-1187, and parts of her for a century more: coming to her, not, like most other invaders, because she was the road to somewhere else, but because she was herself, in their eyes, the goal of all roads, the central and most blessed province of the world, and yet but repeating upon her the old contest between East and West. Napoleon the Great made her the pathway of his ambition towards that empire on the Euphrates and Indus whose fate was decided on her plains, 1799. Since then, Syria's history has mainly consisted in a number of sporadic attempts on the part of the Western world to plant upon her both their civilisation and her former religion.

Between Europe and the East.

Thus Syria has been a land in which history has very largely repeated itself; and if we believe that history never repeats, without explaining, itself, we shall see the value of all these invasions from Asia, Africa, and Europe for illustrating that part of Syrian history which is more especially our interest. What, then, are our authorities for them all?

Many of these invasions have left on the land no trace which is readable by us, but others have stamped their impression both in monuments, which we can decipher,

and in literature. Of monuments, Hittites,[1] Assyrians, and Egyptians have each left a very few—upon stones north of the Lebanon, on the rocks by the old coast road at the mouth of the Dog River,[2] on a solitary stone near the highroad across the Hauran,[3] on a clay tablet found the other day at Lachish,[4] and in some other fragments. But in the Egyptian and Assyrian annals we have itineraries through Syria, and records of conquest, most profuse and informing.[5] The only records left by the Antiochi and Ptolemies, besides the names of certain towns, with a few inscriptions, are coins, still occasionally picked up by the traveller.[6] On the other hand, Greece and Rome have left their monuments over the whole land, but especially on the plains and plateaus: in Lebanon solitary Greek temples, with inscriptions to the gods of Greece and the native gods; but across Jordan whole cities, with all the usual civil architecture of theatres, amphitheatres, forums, temples, baths, and colonnaded streets. Yet you will see none earlier than the time Rome threw her shield between

Egyptian and Assyrian Records.

Greek and Roman.

[1] Wright, *Empire of the Hittites*; Conder, *Heth and Moab*; Sayce's *Races of the Old Testament*; Léon de Lantsheeres, *De la race et de la langue des Hittites*, Bruxelles, 1891; V. Luschan, etc., *Ausgrabungen in Sendschirli*, I. Einl. v. Inschriften, Berlin, 1893 (not seen).

[2] Robinson, *Later B. R.*, 618 ff.; Layard, *Discov. in Nineveh*, etc., 211 n.; Conder, *Syrian Stone Lore*, 56, 124.

[3] *Z.D.P.V.* xii.

[4] Conder, *Tell-el-Amarna Tablets. P.E.F.Q.*, 1893, Jan.

[5] Lepsius' *Denkmäler aus Aegypten*; *Records of the Past*, esp. Second Series, with Sayce on Tell-el-Amarna Tablets; Tomkins on Campaigns of Thothmes III.; recent papers on these subjects in the *P.E.F.Q.* and *Trans. of the Society of Biblical Archæology*; Conder, *Tell-el-Amarna Tablets*, 1893. Above all, W. Max Müller, *Asien u. Europa n. altägyp. Denkmaler*, 1893.

[6] The authorities on these are:—Gough's *Coins of the Seleucidæ, with Historical Memoirs*, London, 1803; Gardner, *Catalogue of Coins in the British Museum; The Seleucid Kings of Syria*, London, 1878; De Saulcy in *Mélanges de Numismatique* (pp. 45-64); and, of course, the relevant sections in Eckhel, *Doctrina numorum veterum*, and in Mionnet.

the Greek civilisation and the Arab drift from the desert. There are Roman pavements, bridges, and milestones; tombstones of legionaries and officials; imperial and provincial edicts; ascriptions of glory and deity to the emperors.[1] The ruins of the buildings of Herod the Great which survive at Samaria, Cæsarea, and elsewhere are all of Greek character, and must be added to the signs of Western influence, which found so strenuous an ally in that extraordinary Idumean. Coins also abound from this period —imperial coins and those of the free Greek cities.[2]

Through all these ages the contemporary Hebrew, Greek, and Latin literatures supplement the monuments. The historical books of the Old Testament, in the form in which we have them, were composed some centuries after the earliest events of which they treat; but, so far as their geography is concerned, they reflect with wonderful accuracy the early invasions and immigrations into Syria, which we have other means of following. In the Hebrew prophets we have contemporary evidence

The Evidence of the Bible.

[1] The fullest collection of inscriptions is found in vol. iii. of Le Bas and Waddington, *Inscriptions Grecques et Latines, recueillies en Grèce et en Asie Mineure*; text in pt. i., transcriptions and expositions in pt. ii. Cf. Wetzstein, *Ausgewählte Griech. u. Lat. Inschriften gesammelt auf Reisen in den Trachonen u. um das Haurangebirge*, from the *Transactions of the Royal Acad. of Sciences*, Berlin, 1863, with a map; Clermont-Ganneau, *Recueil d'Archéologie Orientale*, Paris, 1888, and various papers in the *P.E.F.Q.*; Mordtmann in the *Z.D.P.V.* vii. 119-124; Allen, 'On Various Inscriptions discovered by Merrill on the East of the Jordan,' in the *American Journal of Philology*, vi.; Rendell Harris, *Some recently Discovered Inscriptions*; my own paper in the *Critical Review*, Jan. 1892, on 'Some Unpublished Inscriptions from the Hauran,' twelve in all, which I have republished in the end of this book. For any relevant Semitic inscriptions, see the *Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum*, Paris, 1881 ff. Cf. Mommsen, *Provinces of the Roman Empire*.

[2] These are still being found in considerable numbers. The authorities are:—F. de Saulcy, *Numismatique de la Terre Sainte*, Paris, 1874; Madden, *Coins of the Jews* (in part); Eckhel, and Mionnet.

of the Assyrian, Egyptian, Scythian, Babylonian, and Persian invasions: to all these the pages of prophecy are as sensitive as the reed-beds of Syria are to the passage of the wind and the flood. Later books, like Daniel and Ecclesiastes, and fragments of books, like some Psalms, betray by their style of thought, and by their language, that Israel has felt the first Greek influences. The books of the Maccabees and Josephus trace for us the course of Greek and Roman advance, the long struggle over plain and mountain—the Hellenisation of the former, the final conquest of the latter by Rome. The Gospels are full of signs of the Roman supremacy—publicans, taxes, Cæsar's superscription on coins, the centurions, the incubus of the Legion, the authority of Cæsar. The Acts tell us how upon the west of Jordan Rome defended Christianity from Judaism, as upon the east she shielded Hellenism from the desert barbarians. In Pagan literature we have by this time many histories and geographies with large information about the Græco-Roman influence in Syria up to the Fall of Jerusalem.[1]

Early Christian Records.

For the first six centuries of our era Syria was a province of the Empire, in which, for a time, Hellenism was more at home than in Hellas itself, and Christianity was first persecuted and then established by Western edicts and arms. The story of this is told by the Syrian and Greek historians of the Church, the

[1] Polybius *passim*; Diodorus Siculus; Arrian's *Anabasis of Alexander*, ii.; Quintus Curtius, iv.; Strabo's *Geography*, especially xvi. 2, and Ptolemy's; *Geographi Græci Minores* (edd., Hudson, Oxford, 1698-1712, and Müller, Paris, 1855-61); Pliny's *Hist. Nat.*, v. 13-19; Tacitus. In English, cf. Gibbon; Mommsen's *Provinces of the Roman Empire*; Schürer's *Hist. of the Jewish People in the Time of Christ*, Eng., 1890 ff.; Morrison's *The Jews under Roman Rule*, 1890; Mahaffy, *The Greek World under Roman Sway*, 1890.

lives of some saints, and some writings of the Fathers.[1] It is supplemented by the Christian remains (especially east of the Jordan), churches, tombs, and houses, with many inscriptions in Greek and Aramæic.[2] The latest Greek inscription in Eastern Palestine appears to be from a year or two after the Moslem invasion.

Authorities on the Crusades.

The next European settlement in Syria was very much more brief. The Latin kingdom of Jerusalem *de facto* lasted from 1099 to 1187—not ninety years; and the coast was Western a century longer. All the more are we astonished at the impression left on the land. In their brief day, these few hundred thousands of colonists and warriors, though the sword was never out of their hand, organised the land into a feudal kingdom as fully assigned, cultivated, and administered as any part of contemporary France or England. Their chroniclers[3] do justice to their courage and exploits on the field, as well as to their treachery, greed, and lust: but to see how truly they made Syria a bit of the West, we need to go to that wonderful work, the *Assizes of Jerusalem*, to the documents

[1] Eusebius, *History of the Church* and *Life of Constantine*. The *History* was continued by Socrates for the years 306-439, by Sozomen largely in imitation of Socrates, and by Theodoret and Evagrius to 594. Stephanus Byzantinus (probably in Justinian's reign) wrote the Ἐθνικά, of which we have only an epitome. The history of Zosimus is that of the Roman Empire from Augustus to 410. Jerome's *Letters* and his *Commentaries*, *passim*. The lives especially of Hilarion, by Jerome, and of Porphyry in the *Acta Sanctorum*. See ch. xi.

[2] See ch. xxviii.

[3] The best are William, Archbishop of Tyre (1174-1188?), *Historia rerum in partibus transmarinis gestarum a tempore successorum Mahumeth usque ad A.D. 1184*; Geoffrey Vinsauf, *Itinerarium Regis Anglorum Richardi*; Bongars' *Gesta Dei per Francos*; Jacques de Vitry; De Joinville's *Memoirs of Louis IX*. From the Saracen side, Boha-ed-Din's *Life of Saladin*, with excerpts from the *History* of Abulfeda, etc., ed. Schultens, 1732; and Imad-ed-Din, El-Katib el Isfahani; *Conquête de la Syrie et de la Palestine*, publié par le Comte Carlo de Landberg: I., Texte Arabe. Leyden, 1888.

of the great Orders of Chivalry,[1] and to the buildings they have scattered all over the land.[2]

Pilgrims and Traders.

The pilgrim literature, which, apart from trade, represents the sole connection between the West and Syria in the centuries between the Moslem invasion and the Crusades and between the Crusades and last century, is exceedingly numerous. Most of it, too, is accessible in modern translations.[3] After the Crusades the Venetians and Genoese continued for a century or two their factories on the Phœnician coast, by which the products of the Far East came to Europe.[4]

[1] The authorities here are :— E. Rey, *Les Colonies Franques de Syrie, aux xiime et xiiime Siècles*, Paris, 1883 ; Prutz, *Entwickelung v. Untergang des Tempel-Herren Ordens*, Berlin, 1888 (not seen) ; Prutz's and Röhricht's papers on the Charters, Papal Bulls, and other documents referring to the Orden der Deutsch Herren and other Orders in *Z.D.P.V.*, vols. viii. and x. See also Conder's papers in the *P.E.F.Q.*, vols. 1889 ff. The best edition of the *Assizes of Jerusalem*, by John d'Ibelin, is Beugnot's in *Recueil des Historiens des Croisades* (Paris, 1841-1881). On the Crusades generally, cf. Gibbon ; Cox's little manual in the *Epochs of History* ; Sybel, *Geschichte der Kreuzzüge* ; *Karten u. Pläne zur Palästina-kunde aus dem 7 bis 10 Jahrhundert*, by Bernhold Röhricht, i., ii., and iii., in *Z.D.P.V.*, vols. xiv. and xv. ; Röhricht's *Regesta Regni Hierosolymitani*, 1893 (not seen).

[2] On Crusading masonry, see Conder in the *P.E.F. Mem.*, Samaria under Cæsarea, and Judæa under Ascalon. On the fortresses, see Rey, *op. cit.* ch. vii., with plans and views. On the churches, De Vogüé, *Églises de la Terre Sainte* ; cf. his *Architecture civile et religieuse de la Syrie*.

[3] In Bohn's *Early Travels in Palestine* ; the translations of the Palestine Pilgrims' Text Society ; Tobler's *Itineraria Hierosolymitana* ; the French *Archives de la Société d'Orient Latin* ; Carmoly's *Itinéraires de la Terre Sainte des xiiime-xviime siècles*, Bruxelles, 1847. I have also found it useful to consult *Reyssbuch des heiligen Landes, das ist eine grundtliche Beschreibung aller u. jeder Meer u. Bilgerfahrten zum heyl. Lande*, etc. etc., Franckfort am Mayn, MDLXXXIII. ; the indispensable Quaresmius, *Historica, Theologica et Moralis Terræ Sanctæ Elucidatio*, Antwerp, 1639 ; and Pietri Della Valle's *Reisebeschreibung*, translated from the Italian, Genff, 1674, but only a few of his 'Sendschreiben' refer to Syria.

[4] Besides Rey, who treats of the commerce of the Crusades (*op. cit.* ch. ix.), the only authorities I know of are Heyd, *Geschichte des Levantehandels im Mittelalter*, Stuttgart, 1879, 2 vols. ; in French, much enlarged, Leipzig, 1885-86, 2 vols ; and *Discorso sopra il Commercio degli Italiani nel sec. xiv.*, Roma, 1818.

Of Napoleon's invasion we have very full information, which not only illustrates the position of Syria as debatable ground between the East and the West, but is especially valuable for the light it throws upon the military geography of the Holy Land. One cannot desire a more comprehensive, a more lucid, outline of the relations of Syria to Egypt, to Asia, to Europe, than is given in the memoirs of his campaigns, dictated by Napoleon himself;[1] while the accounts of his routes and the reasons given for them, his sieges, his losses from the plague, and his swift retreat, enable us to understand the movements of even the most ancient invaders of the land. Napoleon's memoirs may be supplemented by the accounts of the English officers who were with the Turkish forces.[2]

Napoleon's Invasion.

The European invasion of Syria, which belongs to our own day, is already making its impression on the land. Nothing surprised the writer more, on his return to the Holy Land in 1891, after an interval of eleven years, than the great increase of red and sloping roofs in the landscape. These always mean the presence of Europeans: and where they appear, and the flat roofs beloved of Orientals are not visible, then the truly Western aspect of nature in the Holy Land asserts itself, and one begins to understand how Greeks, Italians, and Franks all colonised, and for centuries were at home in, this province of Asia. The Temple Christians from Württemberg have perhaps done more to improve the surface of the country than any other Western

Present Influence of Europe on Syria.

[1] *Guerre de l'Orient*: *Campagnes d'Égypte et de Syrie.* Mémoires dictées par Napoléon lui-même et publiées par Général Bertrand, Paris, 1847.

[2] Walsh, *Diary of the late Campaign, 1799-1801*; Wittman, M.D., *Travels in Syria, etc., 1799-1801, . . . in company with the Turkish Army.*

agency.[1] A Roman Catholic colony has been planted on the shores of the Lake of Galilee. There is an agricultural settlement for Jews near Jaffa, another colony at Artuf, and the Rothschild settlements above Lake Huleh. The Plain of Esdraelon is in the hands of a Greek capitalist. Other Western settlers are scattered over Palestine and Lebanon, and almost everywhere the cultivation of the vine and the silk-worm is spreading rapidly under European care. Large Circassian colonies, planted by the Turkish Government itself near Cæsarea and east of Jordan, must in time considerably affect both the soil and the population about them.[2] But the most important material innovation from the West is the railway. The line just completed between Jaffa and Jerusalem will be useful, it seems, only for pilgrims. Much more effect on the future of Syria may be expected from the line which follows the natural routes of commerce and war through the land from Haifa to Damascus.[3] Not only will it open up the most fertile parts of the country, and bring back European civilisation to where it once was supreme, on the east of Jordan; but if ever European arms return to the country—as, in a contest for Egypt or for the Holy Places, when may they

[1] On these interesting colonies see their journal, *Die Warte des Tempels*; papers in recent volumes of the *Z.D.P.V.*; and the account of them in Ross, *Cradle of Christianity*, London, 1891.

[2] Their three chief colonies are Cæsarea, Jerash, and Rabbath Ammon, the last two of which I visited in 1891. The Government plays them and the Beduin off against each other. They are increasing the area of cultivated land, and improving the methods of agriculture. Perhaps the greatest change is their introduction of wheeled vehicles, which have not been seen in Palestine since the Crusades, except within the last twenty years, when they have been confined to the Jaffa-Jerusalem and Beyrout-Damascus roads and the Temple colonies. See Appendix on 'Roads and Wheeled Vehicles.'

[3] Across Esdraelon, over the Jordan by Bethshan, round the south-east corner of the Lake of Galilee to opposite Tiberias, then up the gorge of Fik to the plateau of the Hauran, and so to Damascus.

not return?—this railway running from the coast across the central battle-field of Palestine will be of immense strategic value.[1]

III. Syria's Opportunity Westward.

In the two previous sections of this chapter we have seen Syria only in the passive state, overrun by those Arabian tribes who have always formed the stock of her population, and traversed, conquered and civilised by the great races of Asia, Africa, and Europe. But in the two remaining sections we are to see Syria in the active state—we are to see these Arab tribes, who have made her their home, pushing through the single opportunity given to them, and exercising that influence in which their glory and hers has consisted. It will be best to describe first the Opportunity, and then the Influence itself—which, of course, was mainly that of religion.

Syria's Single Opening.

In early times Syria had only one direction along which she could exercise an influence on the rest of the world. We have seen that she had nothing to give to the great empires of the Nile and Euphrates on either side of her; from them she could be only a borrower. Then Mount Taurus, though no barrier to peoples descending upon Syria from Asia Minor, seems always to have barred the passage in the opposite direction. The Semitic race has never crossed Mount Taurus.

[1] The European missionary and educational establishments fall rather under the section of Religion.

Practically, therefore, early Syria's only opening lay seawards. If she had anything to pour forth of her own, or of what she had borrowed from the civilisations on either side of her, this must be the direction of outflow. So some of her tribes, whose race had hitherto been known only as land traders, voyagers of the desert, pushed out from her coasts upon the sea. They found it as studded with islands as the desert is studded with oases, and by means of these they gradually reached the very west of Europe.

The Mediterranean Islands.

The first of these islands is within sight of Syria. Cyprus is clearly visible from the hills of northern Syria immediately opposite to it, and at certain seasons of the year may even be descried from Lebanon above Beirut.[1] From Cyprus the coast of Asia Minor is within reach, and the island of Rhodes at the beginning of the Greek Archipelago; whence the voyage was easy, even for primitive navigation, to the Greek mainland, Sicily, Malta, the African coast, Spain and the Atlantic, or north by Italy to Sardinia, Corsica and the coast of Gaul. Along those islands and coasts the line of Phœnician voyages can be traced by the deposit of Semitic names, inscriptions and legends.[2]

[1] See ch. vii., on the Coast.

[2] For the Phœnician inscriptions in Cyprus, Rhodes, Sicily, Malta, Carthage, Sardinia, Spain, and Marseilles, see the *Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum*, vol. i. part i. For names, take the following as instances:—Kition, in Cyprus, is the Hebrew Chittim (see ch. vii.). Mount Atabyrus, in Rhodes, is Mount Tabor, a Semitic term for height. Here Diodorus tells us Zeus was worshipped as a bull, evidently a trace of the Baal-Moloch worship. On many Ægean islands the worship of Chronos points to the same source. The Cyprian Aphrodite herself is just Ashtoreth; and her great feast was at the usual Semitic festival season in the beginning of April, her sacrifice a sheep (Robertson Smith, *Religion of the Semites*, p. 387). One proof of Phœnician influence is the presence of Βετυλαι (= Beth-el), or sacred stones, conical or ovoid pillars. One was in the temple of Aphrodite at

It is not surprising that the early Greek civilisation, which they did so much to form, should have given the Phœnicians the fame of inventors. But they were not much more than carriers. At this early stage of her history Syria had little to give to the West except what she had wholly or partly borrowed. Her art was Egyptian ; the letters she introduced to Europe were from Egyptian sources ; even the commercial terms which she brought into the Greek language from Asia may not have been her own. But quite original were other droppings of her trade on Greece—names of the letters, of vegetables, metals, and some wares,[1] and most, though not all, of the religion she conveyed. The exact debt of Greek religion to Phœnicia will never be known, but the more we learn of both races the more we see how big it was. Myths, rites, morals, all spread westwards, and formed some of the earliest constituents of Greek civilisation. The most of the process was probably over before history begins, for Tarshish was in existence by 1100 B.C. ; and

Phœnician Influence.

Paphos (Tacitus, *Hist.* ii. 3). In Sicily a Carthaginian coin has been discovered with the legend 'BARAT'='the wells,' the Phœnician name for Syracusa. Farther west, Carthage is Qarta Hadasha, 'the New City'; Cadiz, or Gades, is Gadira, from 'gadir,' a fenced place (see Bloch's *Phœnician Glossary*). Tarshish is also of Semitic formation, but of doubtful meaning. Port Mahon, in Minorca, is from the Carthaginian general, Mago. Among the legends are, of course, those of Perseus and Andromeda, Cadmus (from 'Kedem,' the East), Europa, etc.

[1] The following are some of the Phœnician loanwords in Greek :—The names of the letters Alpha, Beta, etc. ; commercial terms, *αρραβων*, interest =ערבון ; *μνα*, weight or coin=מנה ; *κιξαλλης*, pirate, from שלל, booty. The name of at least one animal, גמל=the camel ; names of vegetables, like *ὑσσωπος*=אזוב ; *βαλσαμον*=בשם ; *κυπρος*, Lawsonia alba=נמר ; *λιβανος*, frankincense tree=לבנה ; *κασια*=קציעה, etc. etc. ; of other objects, *χιτων*= כתנה (?) ; *κλωβος*, bird-cage=כלוב, etc. The religious term Βετυλαι=sacred stones, is the Semitic Beit-el, or Bethel.

perhaps the Phœnician migration and establishment of colonies in the West was connected with the disturbances in Syria in the fourteenth century. Another important emigration took place five centuries later. About 800, some fugitives from Tyre founded near an old Phœnician settlement on the coast of Africa, opposite Sicily, another colony called Qarta Hadasha. That is almost good Hebrew for 'the New City,' and has been corrupted by the Greeks into Carchedon, and by the Romans into Carthago. In the sixth century Carthage obtained the sovereignty over her sister colonies in the West;[1] and in the fifth century, while the Northern East under Persia assailed Greece across Asia Minor, the Semitic portion of the East twice assailed Greece across Sicily under the leadership of Carthage.[2] The second assault was led by one whose name was Hannibal, and whose title, like that of all Phœnician magistrates, was Shophet. But Shophet is pure Hebrew, the title of Israel's rulers from Joshua to Samuel. And Hannibaal is just 'the grace of Baal.' Put Jah for Baal, and you have the Hebrew Hananiah; or reverse the word, and you have Johanan, the Greek Ioannes and our John.[3] The Greek colonies in Sicily held their own—held their own, but did not drive the invaders forth. It was reserved for another power to do this and keep the Semite out of Europe.

Carthage.

The first Punic—that is, Poinic, *φοίνικος*, Phœnician—War, in which Rome engaged, was for Sicily, and Rome won it, expelling the Syrian colonists from the island. In revenge, Hamilcar crossed the Straits of Gibraltar in 237; and by 218 his son,

Her Defeat by Rome.

[1] Freeman's *Sicily* (*Story of the Nations* series), p. 56.

[2] 480-473, and again 413-404.

[3] Cf. Freeman, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

Hannibal the Great, had conquered Spain, and crossed the Alps into Italy. But again it was proved that Europe was not to be for the Semites, and Hannibal was driven back. By 205 the Romans had conquered the Iberian peninsula, passed over into Africa, and made that a Roman province.[1] How desperate was the struggle, how firmly the Syrians had planted themselves in the West, may be seen from the fact that seven hundred years after the destruction of Carthage men still talked Punic or Phœnician in North Africa; the Bible itself was translated into the language,[2] and this only died out before its kindred dialect of Arabic in the eighth century of our era.

Further Phœnician Voyages.

During the glory of Carthage the Phœnician navies, crowded out of the eastern Mediterranean by the Greek and Italian races, pushed westward through the Straits of Gibraltar to the Canary Isles,[3] to a strange sea of weeds which may have been the same Columbus met towards America,[4] to the west of Gaul, the Scilly Isles,[5] and therefore surely to Britain; while an admiral of Tyre, at the motion of Pharaoh Necho, circumnavigated Africa in 600 B.C.,[6] or 2000 years before Vasco da Gama.

Later Phœnicia.

After the fall of Carthage—the fall of Tyre had happened a hundred years before—the Phœnician genius confined itself to trading, with occasionally a little mercenary war. Under the Roman Empire, Phœnicians were to be found all round the Mediterranean, with their own quarters and temples in the large

[1] Fifty years later they were interfering in the affairs of the real Phœnicia, and one hundred and fifty later they had reduced Syria to a province also.

[2] Augustine.

[3] Diodorus Siculus, v. 19-20.

[4] Scylax, *Periplus*, 112, in the *Geographi Græci Minores* (ed. Müller, i. 93)

[5] Cassiterides, or tin islands (Strabo, iii. v. 11).

[6] Herodotus, iv. 42

towns. When Rome's hold on the East became firm at the beginning of our era, Syrians[1] flowed into Italy—as Juvenal puts it, the Orontes into the Tiber. There were a few good rhetoricians, grammarians, poets and wits among them, but the mass were slave-dealers, panders and mongers of base superstitions.

During all this time—from the thirteenth century of the old era to the first of the new—there had stood upon the highlands immediately behind Phœnicia a nation speaking almost identically the same dialect; and this nation had heard the Phœnician tales of those western isles and coasts: of Chittim, that is, Cyprus, and of Rodan, that is, Rhodes; Javan, or the Ionians; Elissa, some farther coast of Sicily or Italy; and Tarshish, which was the limit in Spain. And though this tribe had no port of their own, nor were in touch with the sea at all, their imagination followed the Phœnician voyages, but with a nobler ambition than that of gain, and claimed those coast-lands, on which the gross Semitic myths had caught, for high ideals of justice, mercy, and the knowledge of the true God.[2] When one has learned the impressionableness of the early Greek to the religion which Syria sent him by the Phœnicians, and remembers how closely Israel stood neighbour to Phœnicia in place, in language, in political alliance, one's fancy starts the question, What if Phœnicia had also been the carrier of Israel's faith, as of Egypt's letters, Babylon's wares and the wild Semitic myths! It was impossible. When Phœnicia was still a religious influence in the West, Israel either had not arrived in Palestine, or was not so expert in the possibilities of her own religion as to commend it

Israel and Phœnicia.

[1] Also Nabateans, cf. *C.I.S.*, P. i. tom. ii. 183 ff. [2] Isaiah xlii.

to other peoples—though those were her neighbours and kinsmen according to the flesh; and when Israel knew herself as God's servant to the whole world, and conceived Phœnician voyages as means of spreading the truth westward, the Phœnicians were no longer the correspondents, but the enemies, of every other race upon the northern and western shores of the Mediterranean. Take, for instance, the time of Elijah, when Israel and Phœnicia stood together perhaps more closely than at any other period. The slope of religious influence was then, not from Israel to Phœnicia, but from Phœnicia to Israel. It is the attempt to spread into foreign lands the worship of Baal, not the worship of Jehovah, that we see. It is Jezebel who is the missionary, not Elijah; and the paradox is perfectly intelligible. The zeal of Jezebel proceeded from these two conceptions of religion: that among the same people several gods might be worshipped side by side—Phœnician Baal in the next temple to Jehovah of Israel; and that religion was largely a matter of politics. Because she was queen in Israel, and Baal was her god, therefore he ought to be one of Israel's gods as well. But it is better not to be a missionary-religion at all than to be one on such principles; and Israel's task just then was to prove that Jehovah was the one and only God for her own life. If she first proved this on the only true ground—that He was the God of justice and purity—then the time would certainly come when He would appear, for the same reason, the God of the whole earth, with irresistible claims upon the allegiance of Phœnicia and the West. So, with one exception, Elijah confined his prophetic work to Israel, and looked seaward only for rain. But by Naboth's vineyard and other matters

In the time of Elijah.

he taught his people so well the utter difference of Jehovah from other gods—being as He was identical with righteousness, and therefore supreme—that it naturally followed that Israel should see This was the Deity whose interests, whose activity, whose dominion were universal. But that carries us into the heart of our next subject, the Religion of Syria—the inquiry, why Israel alone of Syrian tribes came to so pure a faith, and so sure a confidence of its victory over the world. Let us finish this section by pointing out that when the prophets of Israel did rise to the consciousness of the universal dominion of their religion, it was to Phœnician means—those far Phœnician voyages we have been following—that they looked for carrying it into effect. To the prophets Phœnicia and her influence are a great and a sacred thing. They exult in her opportunities, in her achievements. Isaiah and Ezekiel bewail the destruction of Tyre and her navies as desecration. Isaiah cannot believe it to be final. He sees Phœnicia rising purified by her captivity to be the carrier of true religion to the ends of the earth.[1]

In the later Prophets.

IV. The Religion of Syria.

We have seen that Syria, Esh-Sham, is but 'the north' end of the Semitic world, and that from the earliest times her population has been essentially Semitic. By this it was determined that her *rôle* in history should be predominantly the religious. The Semites are the religious leaders of humanity. The three great monotheisms have risen

[1] Isaiah xxiii. ; Ezekiel xxvi. ff.

among them; the grandest prophets of the world have been their sons. For this high destiny the race were prepared by their age-long seclusion in Arabia.

The Religious temper of the Semites.

In the deserts of Arabia, life is wonderfully tempered. Nature is monotonous, the distractions are few, the influence of things seen is as weak as it may be in this universe; the long fasts, necessary every year, purge the body of its grosser elements, the soul easily detaches itself, and hunger lends the mind a curious passion, mixed of resignation and hot anger. The only talents are those of war and of speech—the latter cultivated to a singular augustness of style by the silence of nature and the long leisure of life.[1] It is the atmosphere in which seers, martyrs, and fanatics are bred. Conceive a race subjected to its influences for thousands of years! To such a race give a creed, and it will be an apostolic and a devoted race.

Now, it has been maintained that the desert did furnish the Arab with a creed, as well as with a religious temperament. M. Renan has declared that the Semite, living where nature is so uniform, must be a monotheist;[2] but this thesis has been disproved by every fact discovered among the Semites since it was first promulgated. The Semitic religions, with two exceptions (one of which, Islam, is largely accounted for by the

Not naturally Monotheists.

[1] Our chief authorities for life in Arabia in ancient and modern times are such travellers as Ludovico Varthema, who went down with the Haj to Mecca in 1503 (Hakluyt Society's publications); Burckhardt, Burton, and especially Doughty (*Arabia Deserta*, 2 vols., Cambridge, 1887), who knows the Bedawee, 'the unsophisticated Semite,' as never Western did before. Cf. Wellhausen, *Skizzen, etc.*, iii., *Reste des Arabischen Heidentums*; Robertson Smith, *Marriage and Kinship in Arabia* and *The Religion of the Semites.*

[2] *Histoire des langues sémitiques*, ed. 3, 1863; 'De la part des peuples sémitiques,' *Asiatic Review*, Feb. and May 1859; and, in a modified form, in his *Histoire d'Israel*, vol. i.

other, Judaism), have not been monotheistic. Introduced to the Euphrates valley, or to Syria, where the forces of nature are as complex and suggestive of many gods as any part of the Aryan world itself, the Semite has gone the way of the Aryans—nay, has preceded them in this way, not only developing a polytheism and mythology of great luxuriance, but proving its missionary to the Greeks. The monotony of the desert, however, counts for something; the desert does not tempt to polytheism. Besides, all Semitic religions have been distinguished by a tendency which makes strongly for unity. Within each tribe there was but one tribal god, who was bound up with his people's existence, and who was their only lord and head. This belief was favourable to monotheism. It trained men to reduce all things under one cause, to fix their attention on a sovereign deity; and the desert, bare and monotonous, conspired with the habit.

An Opportunity for Monotheism.

We may, then, replace Renan's thesis, that the Semite was a born monotheist, by this: that in the Semitic religion, as in the Semitic world, monotheism had a great opportunity. There was no necessary creed in Arabia, but for the highest form of religion there was room and sympathy as nowhere else in the world to the same degree.

Uniqueness of Israel's Monotheism.

Of this opportunity only one Semitic tribe took advantage, and the impressive fact is that the advantage was taken, not in Arabia, but in Syria herself—that is to say, on the soil whose rich and complex forces drew all other Semitic tribes away from the austerity of their desert faith, and turned them into polytheists of the rankest kind. The natural fertility of Syria, as we shall see in a subsequent chapter, intoxicated

her immigrants with nature-worship; the land was covered, not by one nation with its one god, but by many little tribes, each with its patron and lord; while, to make confusion worse confounded, the influence of the powerful idolatries of Egypt and Mesopotamia met and were combined upon her. Yet Syria, and not the Desert of Arabia, was the cradle of monotheism. The period in which this became manifest was, no doubt, one when her history for the first time counteracted to some degree the variety of her natural charms, the confusion of her many faiths. Israel's monotheism became indisputable in the centuries from the eighth to the sixth B.C., the period of the great Assyrian invasions described in Section II. of this chapter. Before the irresistible Assyrian advance the tribal gods of Syria—always identified with the stability of their peoples—went down one after another, and history became reduced to a uniformity analogous to that of nature in the Semitic desert. It was in meeting the problems, which this state of affairs excited, that the genius of Israel rose to a grasp of the world as a whole, and to faith in a sovereign Providence. This Providence was not the military Empire that had levelled the world; He was not any of the gods of Assyria. He was Israel's own tribal Deity, who was known to the world but as the God of the few hills on which His nation hardly maintained herself. Fallen she was as low as her neighbours; taunted she was by them and by her adversaries to prove that Jehovah could save her any more than the gods of Hamath or Damascus or the Philistines had saved them:[1] yet both on the eve of her fall, and in her deepest abasement, Israel affirmed that Jehovah reigned; that He

[1] Isaiah x. 8-11; xxxvi. 18-20; xxxvii. 12, 13.

was Lord of the hosts of heaven and earth; that Assyria was only a tool in His hand.

Why did Israel alone rise to this faith? Why did no other of the gods of the Syrian clans, Baals and Molochs, take advantage of the opportunity? Why should the people of Jehovah alone see a universal Providence in the disasters which they shared, and ascribe it to Him?

The reason of Israel's Monotheism.

The answer to these questions is the beginning of Syria's supreme rank in the religious history of mankind. It is writ, beyond all misreading, in the prophets of the time and in the history of Israel which preceded the prophets. To use their own phrase, the prophets saw *Jehovah exalted in righteousness.* And this was not their invention: it had been implicit in Israel's conception of Jehovah from a very early age. In what are confessedly ancient documents, Jehovah is the cause of Israel's being, of the union of their tribes, of their coming to Palestine, of their instinct to keep separate from other peoples, even when they do not seem to have been conscious of a reason why. But from the first this influence upon them was ethical. It sifted the great body of custom and law which was their common heritage with all other Semitic tribes; it added to this both mercy and justice, mitigating the cruelty of some laws, where innocent or untried life was in danger, but strenuously enforcing others, where custom, greed or tyranny had introduced carelessness with regard to the most sacred interests of life.[1] We may not always be sure of the dates of these laws, but it is past all doubt that the ethical agent at

[1] As, for instance, in the matter of homicide. The contrast of Israel's laws on this with the prevailing Semitic customs, is very significant of the ethical superiority of Israel.

work in them was at work in Israel from the beginning, and was the character, the justice, the holiness of Jehovah. But at first it was not in law so much as in the events of the people's history that this character impressed them. They knew all along that He had found them, chosen them, brought them to the land, borne with them, forgiven them, redeemed them in His love and in His pity, so that, though it were true that no law had come to them from Him, the memory of all He had been to them, the influence of Himself in their history, would have remained their distinction among the peoples. Even in that rude time His grace had been mightier than His law.

Revelation.

On such evidence we believe the assertion of the prophets, that what had made Israel distinct from her kinsfolk, and endowed her alone with the solution of the successive problems of history and with her high morality, was the knowledge of a real Being and intercourse with Him. This is what Revelation means. Revelation is not the promulgation of a law, nor the prediction of future events, nor 'the imparting to man of truths, which he could not find out for himself.' All these ideas of Revelation are modern, and proved false by the only true method of investigation into the nature of Revelation, viz., a comparison of Scripture with those heathen religions from which the religion of Israel sprang, but was so differentiated by the Spirit of God. Such a comparison shows us that the subject of Revelation is the character of God Himself. God had chosen the suitable Semitic temper and circumstance to make Himself known through them in His righteousness and love for men. This alone raised Israel to her mastery of history in the Assyrian period, when her political fortunes were as low, and her

extinction, humanly speaking, as probable as that of her kindred. This alone preserved her in loyalty to her God, and in obedience to His law, during the following centuries, when the other Syrian peoples gave way to the inrush of the Hellenic spirit, and Zeus, Athene, Apollo, Aphrodite and the goddesses of Fortune and Victory, displaced, or were amalgamated with, the discredited Semitic deities.

Israel and Hellenism.

Having solved with the prophets the problem set to her faith by the great Oriental empires, Israel entered—upon the same floor of Syria—on her struggle with the stranger forces of the West, with the genius of Hellenism, and with the dominion of Rome. It is interesting, but vain, to speculate on what would have happened if the Maccabean age had produced a mind like Isaiah's or Jeremiah's, or had met Greece with another spirit than that of Ecclesiastes, or of the son of Sirach. As it was, the age fell far below that of the prophets in insight and in faith. The age of the Maccabees is a return to that of the Judges and Saul, with the Law as a new inspiration. The spiritual yields to the material, though the material is fought for with a heroism which makes the period as brilliant as any in the history of Israel. For a few years the ideal borders of Israel are regained, the law of Moses is imposed on Greek cities, the sea is reached, and the hope of Israel looks westward from a harbour of her own.[1] The conflict with Hellenism intensifies the passion for the Law, the conflict with Rome, the passion for the land and political independence. In either case it is the material form which becomes the main concern of the people. Nevertheless, as Paul has taught us to see in his explanation of history,[2] this devotion to the letter of Law and Prophecy was a

[1] See p. 136.

[2] Cf. Robertson Smith, *O.T.J.C.*, 315 ff.

discipline for something higher. By keeping the commandments, and cherishing the hopes, in however mechanical a way, Israel held herself distinct and pure. And, therefore, though she felt the land slipping from under her, and consoled herself, as her hold on this world became less sure, with an extraordinary development of apocalypse—visions of another world that are too evidently the refuges of her despair in this—she still kept alive the divinest elements in her religion, the gifts of a tender conscience, and of the hope of a new redemption under the promised Messiah.

Jesus Christ.

He came in Jesus of Nazareth. He came when the political estate of Israel was very low. He was born into the Empire: He grew up within twenty miles of the great port by which Rome poured her soldiers and officials upon His land. His youth saw Herod's embellishment of Palestine with Greek architecture. The Hellenic spirit breathed across all the land. Jesus felt the might and the advantage of these forces, which now conspired to build upon Syria so rich a monument of Pagan civilisation. When He had been endowed by the Spirit with the full consciousness of what He could be, He was tempted, we are told, to employ the marvellous resources of Greece and Rome. *The Devil taketh Him up into an exceeding high mountain and showeth Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them.* In that day such a vision was nowhere in the world so possible as in Syria. But He felt it come to Him wedded to apostasy. *All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.* And He replied from the Hebrew Scriptures with a confession of allegiance to the God of Israel: *Get thee behind me, Satan, for it is written, Thou shalt worship Jehovah thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.* Also

on other occasions He made an absolute distinction between Israel and the Gentiles: *Not as the Gentiles*, He said, *for after all these things do the Gentiles seek, but your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. Ye worship ye know not what, we know what we worship, for the salvation is from the Jews. I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*

His view of the Gentile world.

But within Israel and her Scriptures Jesus made great distinctions. He said that much of Scripture was temporary, given at the time because of the hardness of the people's hearts, laws and customs that had passed away with the rise to a new stage in God's education of the world. The rest He confirmed, He used for feeding His own soul, and for teaching and leading others to God. Within the nation, also, He distinguished between the true and the false Israel. He insisted that, especially of late, Judaism had gone astray, laying too much emphasis on the letter of the law, nay, adding intolerably to this, and wrongly, foolishly, desiring the external kingdom. He insisted on the spiritual as against the external, on the moral as against the ceremonial, on grace as above law. So the religious authorities were moved against Him.

His judgment of Israel.

But their chief cause of offence—and it has ever since been the stumbling-block of many who count His ethical teaching supreme—was the claim He made for Himself. He represented Himself not only as the Messiah, but as indispensable to the race; He not only read the whole history of Israel as a preparation for Himself, but, looking forward, He claimed to inspire, to rule, and to judge all history of men for all time to come. A little bit of Syria was enough for His own ministry, but He sent His disciples into the whole

His claims for Himself.

world. Morality He identified with obedience to Himself. Men's acceptance by God He made dependent on their acceptance of His claims and gifts. He announced the forgiveness of sins absolutely, yet connected it with His own death. He has given the world its highest idea of God, yet He made Himself one with God. He predicted His death, and that He should rise again: and to His disciples not expecting this He did appear, and, in the power of their conviction that God had proved His words and given Him the victory over death, He sent them into the whole world—the whole world to which every port in Syria, on sea or desert, was at that time an open gateway.

To the story of His life and death, to the testimony of His resurrection, to His message from God, the Greek world yielded, which had refused to listen to Judaism. All the little frontiers and distinctions of Syria melted before Him. For the first time, without the force of arms, the religion of Israel left the highlands, in which it had been so long confined, and flowed out upon the plains. With the Book of Acts we are on the sea-coast and among Greek cities; Peter is cured of his Judaism in Cæsarea, and the Holy Ghost descends on the Gentiles; the chief persecutor of the Church is converted on pagan soil, at Damascus; the faith spreads to Antioch, and then bursts westward along the old Phœnician lines, by Cyprus, the coasts of Asia Minor, the Greek isles and mainland, to Italy, Africa, and Spain.

The first spread of the Gospel.

But Christianity had not yet left Syria. As we shall see when we come to visit the Maritime Plain and the Hauran, there are no other fields in the world where the contest of Christianity and Paganism was more critical, or has left more traces. The histories

Christianity and Paganism.

of Eusebius and his followers, the lives of such saints as Porphyry and Hilarion, relate in full the missionary labours, the persecutions, the martyrdoms, and the ambiguous political triumphs of the Church in Philistia and the Shephelah.[1] In the indestructible basalt of Hauran there are monuments of the passage from Paganism to Christianity even more numerous and remarkable than the catacombs and ruins of ancient Rome. There are also what Italy cannot give us—the melancholy wrecks of the passage from Christianity to Mohammedanism. This passage was accomplished within a few years. The Mohammedan era began in 622, Damascus fell in 634, Jerusalem in 637, Antioch in 638. The last Greek inscription in Hauran is about 640, and has no emperor's name, but simply, 'Christ being King.'[2] The reasons of this rapid displacement of the one religion by the other are very clear. When they met and fought for Syria, Christianity was corrupt, and identified with a political system that was sapped by luxury and rent asunder by national strifes; Mohammedanism was simple, austere, full of faith, united, and not yet so intolerant as it afterwards became. Many Christians accepted with joy the change of ruler; few believed that, in the end, he would enforce a change of faith as well. But afterwards the persecution settled steadily down. The Christians were driven to the heights of Lebanon, or were suffered to remain only about Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Damascus, and a few other localities.

Christianity and Islam.

Then came what we have already glanced at in our catalogue of Western influences on Syria, the impression

[1] For the Hauran monuments, see p. 13; for Eusebius and other historians, p. 15.

[2] See ch. xxviii.

made by the Crusades. Seen across the shadow of their great failure, the Crusades shine but a gleam of chivalry and romance. Only when you visit Syria do you learn with what strenuous faith, with what an infinite purpose, those ventures of a mistaken Christianity were waged. Syria was settled, organised, and built over almost as fully as any part of contemporary England. The reason that the remains of Greek civilisation are so meagre on the west of the Jordan is the activity of the Crusaders. Large cities which were famous in ancient times, like Askalon and Cæsarea, bear now in their ruins few but Crusading marks. How firmly they were built! To-day the mortar in them is harder than the stone it binds. But it is not by these coast fortresses, nor by the huge castles crowning the heights far inland, that the Crusades impress you, so much as by the ruins of lonely churches and cloisters, which are scattered all over the land, far from the coast and the shelter of the great Frankish citadels.[1] After this interval of Christian rule comes the long period of silence and crumbling, and then we see the living churches of to-day, the flourishing missions and schools of nearly every sect in Christendom, and the long lines of pilgrims coming up to Jerusalem from the four corners of the world.[2]

The Crusades.

[1] For authorities on the Crusades, see pp. 17, 18.

[2] The chief native churches of Syria are (1) the orthodox Greek, with two patriarchates in Syria—Antioch and Jerusalem; the patriarchs are nominally subject to the Patriarch at Constantinople, and to the Synod there. (2) The Maronites (from John Maro, their first bishop) were originally Monothelites, but in 1182, as a result of dealings with Rome, they were received into communion with the latter, giving up their Monothelite doctrines, but retaining the Syriac language for the mass, and the marriage of their priests. They have one 'Patriarch of Antioch and all the East,' elected by bishops and archbishops, and confirmed by the Pope. There is a college for them, conducted by Jesuits, near the Nahr el Kelb. The best account of them is

In all this the Palestine of tó-dáy is much more a museum of church history than of the Bible—a museum full of living as well as ancient specimens of its subject.

Christianity in Syria to-day.

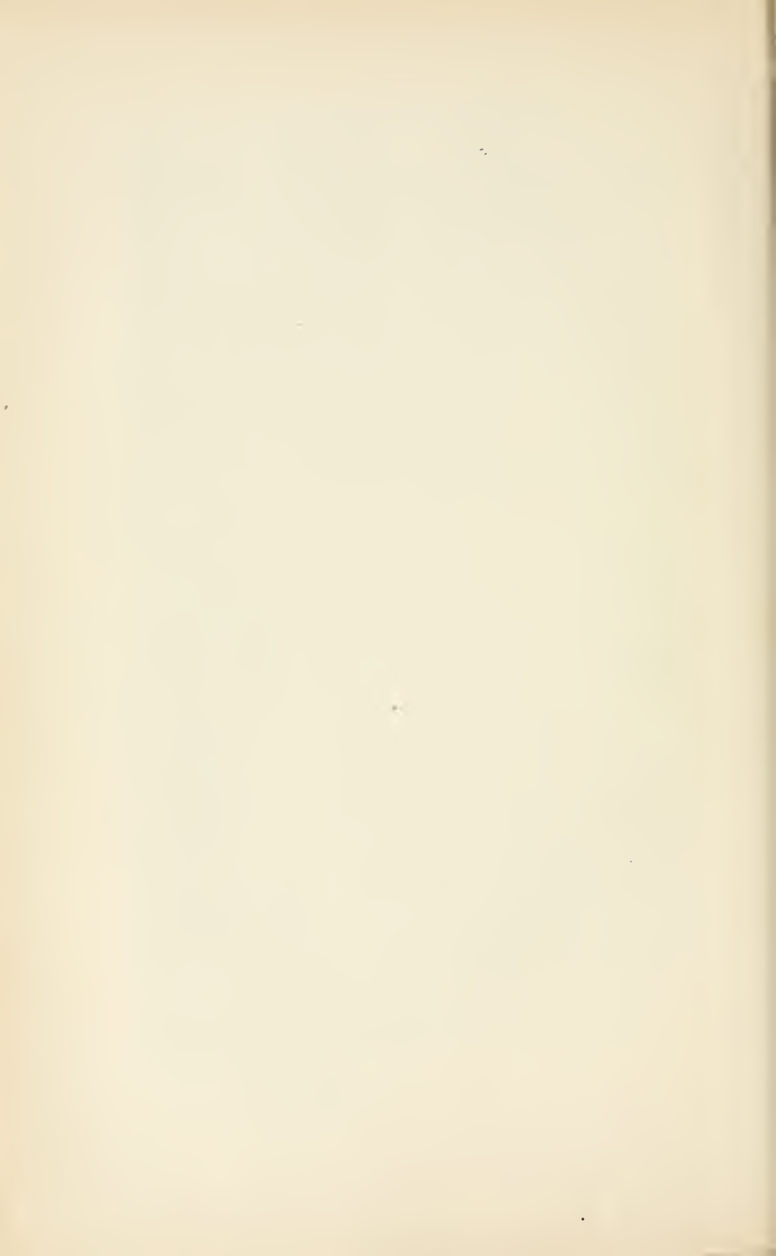
The present state of Christianity in Syria is very interesting, showing almost all the faults, as well as virtues, which have been conspicuous in church history from the beginning. Greeks and Latins are waging with each other a war for the possession of holy places, real and feigned. They have disfigured the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, and threaten to cover the most of the land with rival sanctuaries, planted side by side as they are even at Gethsemane.[1] Behind all the Churches move, as of old, political interests, com-

that by Mr. Bliss in the *P.E.F.Q.* vols. for 1892-3. (3) In the seventeenth century Roman missions succeeded in detaching a large number of the Greek Church, allowing the mass in the vernacular, Arabic or Greek communion in both kinds, and marriage of the clergy ; but insisting on recognition of the Pope, adoption of the *Filioque*, and observance of Latin Easter. These are now the Melchites, or Greek Catholics, who own one 'Patriarch of Antioch, Jerusalem, and Alexandria,' elected by bishops, confirmed by the Pope. (4) Fragments of the old Syriac Church still exist in the land.

Protestant missionaries came to the land in the beginning of the century, *via* Cyprus, where their earliest tombstones are. The American Presbyterians have worked longest and most powerfully—their two greatest works the College and its Press at Beyrout, and their translation of the Bible into Arabic. The Irish Presbyterian Church labours in Damascus and round about ; Church of Scotland Missions to the Jews in Beyrout ; Free Church of Scotland's Medical Missions at Shweir in Lebanon, at Tiberias and Safed ; Anglican Missions all over Palestine, with bishop in Jerusalem ; Jewish Missionary Societies of Church of England in Jerusalem, Damascus, and elsewhere ; Quaker and other missions here and there. Independent societies are also at work, schools at Nazareth, Jaffa, etc., and especially Edinburgh Medical Mission at Damascus, and British Syrian Schools organisation, which pretty well covers Lebanon. East of Jordan are the Church Missionary's church and schools at Es-Salt and other places, and an independent mission at Kerak.

[1] The bitter feeling between the two Churches which this rival building of ecclesiastical show-places has stirred may be seen in the title of a paper in the Roman Catholic *Das Heilige Land* for 1890, pp. 137-148. It runs, *Die jungsten Gewaltthaten der schismatischen Griechen in Jerusalem.*

plicating and further debasing the quarrel. The native Christians, partly excusable by the long oppression they have suffered, feel that they hold no mission to Mohammedanism, and, it would appear, hardly believe that a Mohammedan can be converted. The Protestant missions have also, in present political conditions, found it impossible to influence any but individual Moslems; but they have introduced the Bible in the vernacular, and this has had important effects on the native Churches. It is all very well to say, as certain have said in the recent controversy within the Anglican Church, that the Western Churches are in Palestine for other purposes than building rival conventicles to the Eastern; but once the Bible was introduced in the vernacular, and studied by the common people, secession was morally certain from the native Churches, and for this the Western missionaries were bound, whether willing or no, to provide congregations and pastors. It is by a native church whose mother tongue is Arabic that the Moslems will be reached, though we do not yet see whether this is to take place through the older bodies, that give evidence of new life, or through the new congregations of the Western missions. Meantime two things are coming home to the Moslem: opportunities of education of a very high kind are within reach of all portions of the population, and even the Moslems of Damascus are waking up to the real meaning of Christianity, through that side of her which represents perhaps more vividly than any other, the Lord's own love and power to men—medical missions.



CHAPTER II

THE FORM OF THE LAND AND ITS HISTORICAL CONSEQUENCES

For this chapter consult Maps I., II., III

THE FORM OF THE LAND AND ITS HISTORICAL CONSEQUENCES

WE have seen that Syria's closest relations are with the Arabian peninsula, of which, indeed, it forms the north end. That Syria is not also Arabian in character—that the great Arabian Desert does not sweep on to the Mediterranean except at the extreme south-east corner—is due not only to the neighbourhood of that sea, but much more to the peculiar configuration of the land itself. The Arabian plateau ceases nearly ninety miles from the Mediterranean, because an immense triple barrier is formed against it. Parallel to the coast of the Levant, and all the way from Mount Taurus to the neighbourhood of the Red Sea, there run two great mountain ranges with an extraordinary valley between them. These ranges shut out the desert, and by help of the sea charge the whole climate with moisture—providing rains and mists, innumerable fountains and several large rivers and lakes. They and their valley and their coast-land are Syria; Arabia is all to the east of them. The Syrian ranges reach their summits about midway in the Alpine heights of the Lebanons. The Lebanons are the focus of Syria. Besides the many streams which spring full-born from their roots, and lavish water on their

Syria's barrier to the desert.

immediate neighbourhood, four great rivers pass from the Lebanons across the length and breadth of the province. The Orontes flows north, and waters most of northern Syria, creating Antioch ; the Abana, or Baradá, flows east, and reclaims for Syria a large portion of what would otherwise be desert, creating Damascus ; the Litâny rushes west in a bed too deep and narrow for any work save that of intersecting the land ; and the Jordan flows south, forming three lakes, and otherwise intensifying the division between the two ranges. Of these rivers, only the Orontes and Litâny reach the open sea ; the Jordan comes to an end in the Dead Sea, and the Abana dies out in combat with the desert. The fate of the latter is a signal proof of how desperately Syria has been rescued from Arabia, and a symbol of the profound influence which the surrounding, invading desert has had upon all her culture and civilisation.

A triple barrier.

The part of Syria with which we have to do is all to the south of the summits of the Lebanons. On their western slope the gorge of the Litâny may be taken as the most natural limit, though we shall sometimes pass a little beyond it. On the eastern slope we shall not go north of the Abana and Damascus. We have first to survey the great triple barrier against the desert, and we commence with its most distinctive feature —the valley between the two great ranges.

1. The Jordan valley.

South of the Lebanons, this valley, with the young Jordan in its embrace, begins to sink below the level of the sea. At the Lake of Huleh it is just seven feet above that level ; at the Lake of Galilee, ten miles farther south, it is 680 feet below, and so for sixty-five miles more it continues to descend, till at the

Dead Sea it is 1290 feet below. From here it rapidly rises to a height of nearly 300 feet above the sea, and thence slowly sinks again to the Gulf of Akabah, which forms its southern continuation. For this unique and continuous trench from the Lebanons to the Red Sea there is no single designation. By using two of its names which overlap each other, we may call it the Jordan-'Arabah Valley. From the Lake of Galilee to the south of the Dead Sea it is called by the Arabs the Ghôr, or Depression.[1]

On either side of this run the two great Syrian ranges. Fundamentally of the same formation, they are very different in disposition. The western is a long, deep wall of limestone, extending all the way from Lebanon in the north to a line of cliffs opposite the Gulf and Canal of Suez—the southern edge of the Great Desert of the Wandering. In Lebanon this limestone is disposed mainly in lofty ranges running north and south; in Upper Galilee it descends to a plateau walled by hills; in Lower Galilee it is a series of still less elevated ranges, running east and west. Then it sinks to the plain of Esdraelon, with signs of having once bridged this level by a series of low ridges.[2] South of Esdraelon it rises again, and sends forth a branch in Carmel to the sea, but the main range continues parallel to the Jordan Valley. Scattering at first through Samaria into separate groups, it consolidates towards Bethel upon the narrow table-land of Judæa, with an average height of 2400 feet, continues so to the south of Hebron, where by broken and sloping strata it lets itself down, widening the while, on to the plateau of the Desert of the Wandering. This

2. The western range.

[1] See more fully ch. xxii.

[2] At Shêkh Abrek and Lejjun.

Western Range we shall call the Central Range, for it, and not the Jordan Valley, is historically the centre of the land. The watershed lies, not down the middle of the range, but nearer the east. The western flank is long and gentle, falling on to a maritime plain of very varying breadth, a few hundred feet above the sea ; but the eastern is short and precipitous, dragged down, as it were, by the fissure of the Jordan Valley to far below the sea-level. The effect of this appears in the sections given on the large map accompanying this volume.

3. The eastern range.

Down the eastern side of the Jordan Valley the range is even more continuous than that down the west. Sinking swiftly from Mount Hermon to 2000 feet above the sea, it preserves that average level southward across the plateau of Hauran to the great cleft of the river Yarmuk ; is still high, but more broken by cross valleys through Gilead ; and forms again an almost level table-land over Moab. Down the west of Hauran, on the margin of the Jordan Valley, the average level is raised by a number of extinct volcanoes, which have their counterparts also to the south and east of Damascus, and these have covered the limestone of the range with a deep volcanic deposit as far as the Yarmuk. South of the eastern line of volcanoes runs the Jebel Hauran, or Druze Mountain, as it is called from its latest colonists, and forms the boundary in that direction—the eastern boundary of Syria. Farther south the range has no such definite limit, but rolls off imperceptibly into the high Arabian Desert. Here we may take for a border the great Hajj Road, past the Upper Zerka to Ma'en.

We see, then, that Palestine is disposed, between the

Sea and the Desert, in a series of four parallel lines or bands running north and south :[1]—

Sea.	The Maritime Plain.	The Central Range.	The Jordan Valley.	The Eastern Range.	Desert.

Now, were there no modifications of these four long bands between the Sea and the Desert, the geography of Palestine would indeed be simple, and in consequence the history of Palestine very different from what has actually been. But the Central Range undergoes three modifications which considerably complicate the geography, and have had as powerful an influence on the history as the four long lines themselves.

Modifications of the four zones.

In the first place, the Central Range is broken in two, as we have seen, by the Plain of Esdraelon, which unites the Jordan Valley with the Maritime Plain.

Esdraelon.

Again, from Judæa the Central Range does not fall immediately on the Maritime Plain, as it does farther north from Samaria. Another smaller, more open range comes between—the hills of the so-called Shephelah. These are believed to be of a different kind of limestone from that of the Central Range, and they are certainly separated from Judæa by a well-defined series of valleys along their whole extent.[2] They do not continue opposite Samaria, for there the Central Range itself descends on the plain, but, as we shall see, they have a certain counterpart in the soft, low hills which separate the Central Range from Carmel.

The Shephelah.

And thirdly, south of Judæa the Central Range droops and spreads upon a region quite distinct in character from the tableland to the north of Hebron—the

The Negeb.

[1] This is the division adopted by Robinson in his *Phys. Geog.*, p. 17, and by Henderson, *Palestine*, pp. 15-21.

[2] See p. 205.

Negeb, or South Country as it is translated in our English version. As all of these three regions—Esdraelon, the Shephelah and the Negeb—have also proved their distinctness from the Central Range, as from the Maritime Plain, by their greatly differing histories, we add them to our catalogue of the ruling features of the land, which we now reckon as seven. From the West these lie as follows :—

1. The Maritime Plain.
2. The Low Hills or Shephelah.
3. The Central Range—cut in two by
4. Esdraelon, and running out into
5. The Negeb.
6. The Jordan Valley.
7. The Eastern Range.

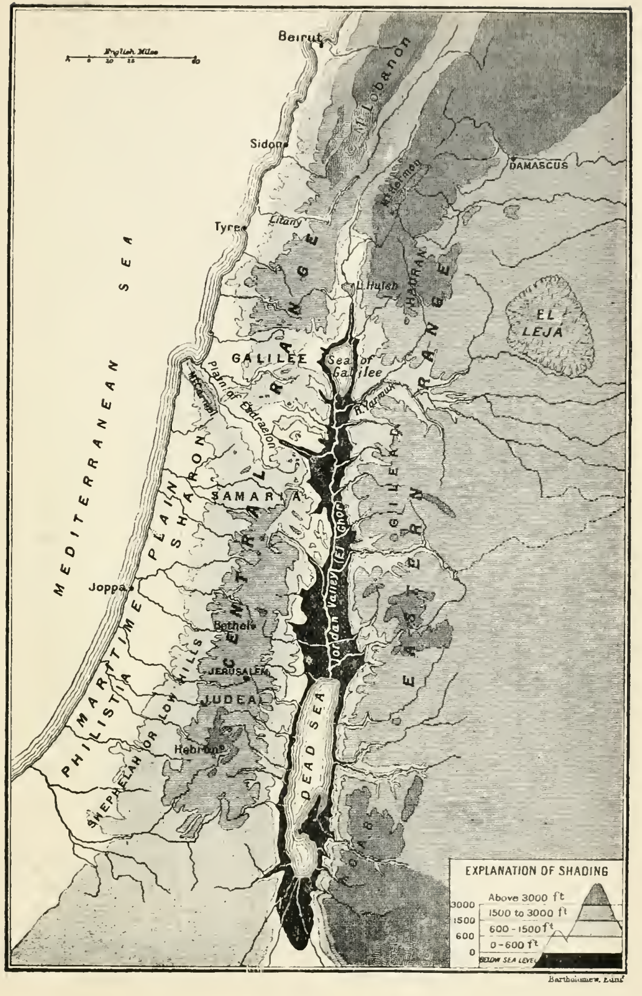
In addition there are the Lebanons and Carmel. For some reasons the Lebanons ought to be at the head of the above list, because the four long strips flow from and are dominated by them. But the Lebanons are too separate, and stand by themselves. Carmel, on the other hand, is not separate enough. Geographically a branch of the Central Range, though cut off from it by a district of lower and softer hills like the Shephelah, Carmel has never had a history of its own, but its history has been merged either in that of the coast or in that of Samaria.[1] Carmel, however, was always held distinct in the imagination of Hebrew writers, as, with its bold forward leap to the sea, it could not but be ; nor will any one, who desires to form a vivid picture of the country, leave this imposing headland out of his vision.

The Lebanons and Carmel.

The whole land may then be represented as on the opposite page.

[1] See ch. xx.

PHYSICAL SKETCH MAP



In the summary descriptions of the Promised Land in the Old Testament we find all these features mentioned,—with the exception of Esdraelon, which falls under the general designation of valley-land, and with the addition sometimes of the slopes or flanks [1] of both ranges, which are distinct in character, and often in population, from the broad plateaus above them. An account of these passages, and of all the general geographical terms of the Bible, will be found in an appendix. Here it is enough to give a few of the proper names. We have mentioned that for the Jordan Valley, the 'Arabah; that for the Low Hills, the Shephelah; and that for the South, the Negeb. The Maritime Plain between Carmel and Joppa was called in Hebrew Sharon, probably meaning the Level, but in Greek the Forest, from a great oak forest which once covered it.[2] To the south the name for it was Pelesheth, Philistia, or, poetically, *the Shoulder of the Philistines*, from its shape as it rises from the sea.[3] The Hebrew word *darom* or *daroma*,[4] meaning south, was applied by the Jews shortly before our era to the whole of the Maritime Plain southwards from Lydda:[5] in Christian times Daroma extended inland to the Dead Sea, and absorbed both the Shephelah and Negeb.[6] The Arabs confined the name to a fortress south of Gaza—the Darom of the Crusaders.[7] What we know as Esdraelon was, in its

[1] Ashdoth = אשדות. [2] See pp. 147, 148. [3] Isa. xi. 14.

[4] דרום, or with the Aramaic definite article דרומא.

[5] Neubauer, *Géog. du Talmud*, p. 62.

[6] In the *Onomasticon*, not only is Eshtemoa in Dan said to be in the Daroma, and Ziklag and other towns of Simeon, far south of Beit-Jibrin; but Maon and Carmel on the Judæan table-land, and Gadda *imminens mari mortuo*. There was a Daroma Interior (see Art. 'Jether').

[7] Now Deir el Belah. Will. Tyre, xx. 19, derives Darom from Deir-Rum, Convent of the Greeks, but the other is the probable derivation.

western part, the Open Plain of Megiddo, but, on its eastern slope to the Jordan, the Vale of Jezreel.[1] Neither of the two great ranges was covered in its whole extent by one proper name. The Central was divided, according to the tribes upon it, into Mount Judah, Mount Ephraim or Israel,[2] and Mount Naphtali. In the English version mount is often rendered by *hill-country*,[3] but this is misleading. With their usual exactness, the Hebrews saw that these regions formed part of one range, the whole of which they called not by a collective name, but singularly —The Mountain—just as to-day the inhabitants of the Lebanons speak of their double and broken range also in the singular, as El-Jebel. Before the Israelites came into the land they knew the Central Range as the Mount of the Amorite.[4] The Eastern Range was known under the three great divisions of Bashan to the north of the Yarmuk; Mount Gilead to the south of that;[5] and to the south of that across Moab, Ha-Mîshôr, The Level, or The Plateau *par excellence*. Another name applied to the northern end of the Moab mountain-wall, as seen from the west, the Mount or Mountains of the 'Abarim[6]—that is, Those-on-the-Other-Side—was applicable, as indeed it was probably applied, to the Eastern Range in its entire extent.[7]

Mountain and Plain.

Viewing, then, all these modifications of the great parallel lines of the land, we see that this fourfold division, fundamental as it is, is crossed, and to some extent superseded, by a simpler distinction between mountain and plain, or, to speak more exactly,

[1] See ch. xix. [2] See pp. 325, 338.
[3] Hill-country of Judæa, Luke i. 39, 65; Josh. xxi. 11; but always Mount Ephraim. [4] Deut. i. 7.
[5] But see ch. xxv. [6] Numb. xxvii. 12.
[7] Traces of this in Ezek. xxxix. 11, where read עֹבְרִים.

between hilly country and level country. This is obvious geographically: it has been of the utmost importance historically, for the mountain was fit for infantry warfare only, but the plain was feasible for cavalry and chariots; and, as Palestine from her position was bound to be crossed by the commerce and the war of the two great continents on either side of her, her plains would bear the brunt of these, while her mountains would be comparatively remote from them. All the Central Range, and the centre of the Eastern Range, was mountain, fit for infantry only. The Maritime Plain, Esdraelon, and the Jordan Valley, along with the great plateaus of the Eastern Range, Hauran and Moab, were plains, bearing the great trunk roads, and feasible for cavalry and chariots. Now, it is of the greatest importance to observe that all the mountain-land, viz., the Central Range and Gilead, represents Israel's proper and longest possessions, first won and last lost —while all the valley-land and table-land was, for the most part, hardly won and scarcely kept by Israel; but at first remained for long in Canaanite keeping, and towards the end was the earliest to come under the great invading empires. Not only the course of Assyrian and Egyptian war but the advance of Greek culture and of Roman conquest is explained (as we shall see in detail) by this general distinction between hilly and level land, which, especially on the east of Jordan, does not correspond to the distinction of mountain range from Jordan Valley and Maritime Plain. Enisled by that circuit of lowland—the Ghôr, Esdraelon, and the Maritime Plain—the Central Range in Judah and Ephraim formed Israel's most constant sanctuary, and Gilead was generally attached to it. But, from the table-land of Hauran, Israel were driven

by the chariots of Syria; they held Moab only at intervals; the Canaanites kept them for long and repeated periods out of the Upper Jordan Valley and Esdraelon; and, except for two brief triumphs in the morning and in the evening of their history, the Philistines kept them out of the Maritime Plain. So, when the Greeks came, the regions they covered were the coast, the Jordan Valley, the Hauran, the eastern levels of Gilead, and Moab; but it is noticeable that in Gilead itself the Greek cities were few and late, and in the Central Range not at all. And so, when the Romans came, the tactics of their great generals, as may be most clearly illustrated from Vespasian's campaign, were to secure all the plains, then Samaria, and, last of all, the high, close Judæa.

But this distinction between mountain and plain, which accounts for so much of the history of the land, does not exhaust its extraordinary variety. Palestine is almost as much divided into petty provinces as Greece, and far more than those of Greece are her divisions intensified by differences of soil and climate. The two ends of the Jordan are not thirty miles away from those parts of the Maritime Plain which are respectively opposite them, yet they are more separate from these than, in Switzerland, Canton Bern is from Canton Valais. The slopes of Lebanon are absolutely distinct from Galilee; Galilee is cut off from Hauran, and almost equally so from Samaria. From Hauran the Jebel Druz stands off by itself, and Gilead holds aloof to the south, and again Moab is distinct from Gilead. On each of the four lines, too, desert marches with fertile soil, implying the neighbourhood of very different races and systems of civilisation. Upon the Central Range

Brokenness of the land.

itself Judah is bare, austere, secluded—a land of shepherds and unchanging life: Samaria is fertile and open—a land of husbandmen, as much in love with, as they were liable to, foreign influences. These differences of soil are intensified by differences of climate. In Palestine there is every climate between the sub-tropical of one end of the Jordan Valley and the sub-Alpine above the other end. There are palms in Jericho and pine forests in Lebanon. In the Ghôr, in summer, you are under a temperature of more than 100° Fahrenheit, and yet you see glistening the snow-fields of Hermon. All the intermediate steps between these extremes the eye can see at one sweep from Carmel —the sands and palms of the coast; the wheat-fields of Esdraelon; the oaks and sycamores of Galilee; the pines, the peaks, the snows of Anti-Lebanon. How closely these differences lie to each other! Take a section of the country across Judæa. With its palms and shadoofs the Philistine Plain might be a part of the Egyptian Delta; but on the hills of the Shephelah which overlook it, you are in the scenery of Southern Europe; the Judæan moors which overlook them are like the barer uplands of Central Germany, the shepherds wear sheepskin cloaks and live under stone roofs—sometimes the snow lies deep; a few miles farther east and you are down on the desert among the Bedouin, with their tents of hair and their cotton clothing; a few miles farther still, and you drop to torrid heat in the Jordan Valley; a few miles beyond that and you rise to the plateau of the Belḳâ, where the Arabs say 'the cold is always at home.' Yet from Philistia to the Belḳâ is scarcely seventy miles.

All this means separate room and station for a far greater variety of race and government than could

have been effected in so small a land by the simple distinction of Mountain and Plain. What is said of the people of Laish, in the north nook of the Jordan Valley, is very characteristic of the country. *And the five men* of Dan *came to Laish, and saw the people who were in its midst, peaceful and careless, possessing riches, and far from the Phœnicians, and without any relation with the Arameans.*[1] Laish is only twenty-five miles from the Sidonian coast, and about forty from Damascus, but great mountains intervene on either side. Her unprovoked conquest by the Danites happened without the interference of either of those powerful states. From this single case we may understand how often a revolution, or the invasion or devastation of a locality, might take place without affecting other counties of this province—if one may so call them, which were but counties in size though kingdoms in difference of race and government.

Its consequences in history.

The frequent differences of race in the Palestine of to-day must strike the most careless traveller. The Christian peoples, more than half Greek and partly Frank, who were driven into the Lebanon at various times by the Arab and Turk, still preserve on their high sanctuary their racial distinctions. How much taller and whiter and nobler are the Druses of Carmel than the fellahin of the plain at their feet![2] How distinct the Druses of Jebel Hauran are from the Bedouin around them! The

[1] Judges xviii. 7: according to Budde's separation of the two narratives intertwined in this chapter (*Bücher Richter etc.*, p. 140).

[2] To a less extent the same contrast prevails between the peasants of the Ghuta round Damascus and the finer peasants of Hauran, but the population of Hauran is, in many cases, so very recent an immigration (see ch. xxiv.), that it is difficult to appreciate the causes of this difference.

Greeks of Beyrout are half the world away from the Arabs of Damascus. On the Central Range, within Judæa itself, the desert has preserved the Bedouin unchanged, within a few miles of that medley of nations, Jerusalem. And, finally, within the Arab family there are differences that approach racial degree. The tropical Ghôr has engendered a variety of Arab, the Ghawarîneh, whose frizzled hair and blackened skin contrast vividly with the pure Semitic features of the Bedouin of the plateaus above him—the 'Adwan or the Beni Sakhr.

Palestine a Land of Tribes.

Therefore, while the simple distinction between mountain and plain enabled us to understand the course of the invasions of the great empires which burst on Syria, these more intricate distinctions of soil, altitude, and climate explain how it was that the minor races which poured into Palestine from parts of the world so different as Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, Arabia, Egypt, and the Greek islands, sustained their own characters in this little crowded province through so many centuries. Palestine has never belonged to one nation, and probably never will. Just as her fauna and flora represent many geological ages, and are related to the plants and animals of many other lands,[1] so varieties of the human race, culture and religion, the most extreme, preserve themselves side by side on those different shelves and coigns of her surface, in those different conditions of her climate. Thus when history first lights up within Palestine, what we see is a confused medley of clans—all that crowd of Canaanites, Amorites, Perizzites, Kenizzites, Hivites, Girgashites, Hittites sons of Anak and Zamzummim—which is so perplexing

[1] For the extreme diversity, see Tristram's various works: Merril's *East of the Jordan*; and the summary in Henderson's *Palestine*.

to the student, but yet in such thorough harmony with the natural conditions of the country and with the rest of the history.[1] Again, if we remember the fitful nature of all Semitic warfare—the great rush, and if that be not wholly successful at first, the resting content with what has been gained—then we can appreciate why, in so broken a land, the invasion of the Hebrew nomads was so partial, and left, even in those parts it covered, so many Canaanite enclaves. And within Israel herself, we understand why her tribes remained so distinct, why she so easily split into two kingdoms on the same narrow Highlands, and why even in Judah, there were clans like the Rechabites who preserved their life in tents and their austere desert habits, side by side with the Jewish vineyards and the Jewish cities.

Palestine, formed as it is, and surrounded as it is, is emphatically a land of tribes. The idea that it can ever belong to one nation, even though this were the Jews, is contrary both to Nature and to Scripture.

[1] Some of these undoubtedly represent various races like Amorites, Hittites, and probably Zamzummim. Others get their name from their localities or the kind of life they lead.



CHAPTER III

THE CLIMATE AND FERTILITY OF THE LAND, WITH THEIR EFFECTS ON ITS RELIGION



For this chapter consult Map I.

THE CLIMATE AND FERTILITY OF THE LAND, WITH THEIR EFFECTS ON ITS RELIGION

WE have already seen some of the peculiarities of the climate and soil of Palestine. We are able to appreciate in some degree the immense differences both of temperature and fertility, which are due, *first,* to the unusual range of level—from 1300 feet below the sea with a tropical atmosphere to 9000 feet above it with an Alpine, and, *second*, to the double exposure of the land—seawards, so that the bulk of it is subject to the ordinary influences of the Mediterranean basin, and desert-wards, so that part of it exhibits most of the characteristics of desert life. Within these ruling conditions we have now to look more closely at the details of the climate and fertility, and then to estimate their social and religious influence.

I. CLIMATE.

The ruling feature of the climate of Syria is the division of the year into a rainy and a dry season.[1] Towards the

[1] On the climate of Palestine, besides works of travel or residence which furnish meteorological statistics, see Lynch's *Narrative and Official Reports*, and Barclay's *City of the Great King*; consult especially Robinson, *Phys. Geog. of the Holy Land*, ch. iii.; *P.E.F.Q.*, especially for 1872; 1883, Chaplin, *Obs. on Climate of Jerus.*; 1888-1893, Glaisher on *Meteoro. Obs. at Sarona*; 1893-4, *Ib. at Jerus.*; Anderlind, *Z.D.P.V.*, viii. 101 ff.: Der Einfluss der Gebirgswaldungen in Nördl. Palästina auf die Vermehrung der wässerigen Niederschlage daselbst; *Id.* xiv.; Ankel, *Grundzüge der Landes natur des Westjordanlandes*, IV, Das Klima; Wittmann, *Travels*, 561-570.

end of October[1] heavy rains begin to fall, at intervals, for a day or several days at a time. These are what the English Bible calls the *early* or *former* rain, literally the *Pourer*.[2] It opens the agricultural year; the soil hardened and cracked by the long summer is loosened, and the farmer begins ploughing.[3] Till the end of November the average rainfall is not large, but it increases through December, January, and February, begins to abate in March, and is practically over by the middle of April. The *latter rains* of Scripture are the heavy showers of March and April.[4] Coming as they do before the harvest and the long summer drought, they are of far more importance to the country than all the rains of the winter months, and that is why these are passed over in Scripture, and emphasis is laid alone on the *early and the latter rains*. This has given most people the idea that there are only two intervals of rain in the Syrian year, at the vernal and the autumnal equinox; but the whole of the winter is the rainy season, as indeed we are told in the well-known lines of the Song of Songs:

The rains.

Lo, the winter is past,
The rain is over and gone.

During most winters both hail and snow fall on the hills. Hail is common, and is often mingled with rain and with thunderstorms, which happen at intervals through the winter, and are frequent in spring.

Hail and snow.

[1] In Lebanon often a month earlier.

[2] יורה, Deut. xi. 14, Jer. v. 24, Hos. vi. 3. מורה, Joel ii. 23, Ps. lxxxiv. 7 (*E.V.* 6). Cf. James v. 7. On rains and seasons generally see Book of Enoch.

[3] The ecclesiastical year of the later Jews began in spring with the month Nisan.

[4] מלקויש. Besides the references in the last note but one, cf. Prov. xvi. 15, Jer. iii. 3, Zech. x. 1. Rain generically = מטר. A burst of rain = גשם.

The Old Testament mentions hail and thunder together.[1] On the Central Range snow has been known to reach a depth of nearly two feet, and to lie for five days or even more, and the pools at Jerusalem have sometimes been covered with ice. But this is rare : on the Central Range the ground seldom freezes, and the snow usually disappears in a day.[2] On the plateaus east of Jordan snow lies regularly for some days every winter, and on the top of Hermon there are fields of it through the summer. None has ever been seen to fall in the tropical Ghôr. This explains the feat of Benaiah, who *went down and slew a lion in the midst of a cistern in the day of the snow*.[3] The beast had strayed up the Judæan hills from Jordan, and had been caught in a sudden snowstorm. Where else than in Palestine could lions and snow thus come together?

In May showers are very rare, and from then till October, not only is there no rain, but a cloud seldom passes over the sky, and a thunderstorm is a miracle.[4] Morning mists, however, are not uncommon—in midsummer, 1891, we twice woke into one as chill and dense as a Scotch 'haar'[5]—but they are soon dispersed. In Bible lands vapour is a true symbol of what is frail and fleeting—as it cannot be to us northerners, to whose coasts the mists cling with a pertinacity suggestive of very opposite ideas. On the other hand, the dews of Syrian nights are excessive ; on many mornings it looks as if there had been heavy rain, and this is the sole slackening of the drought which the land feels from May till October.

[1] Ps. xviii. etc.

[2] On snow in Jerusalem, *P.E.F.Q.*, 1883, 10 f. Robinson, *Phys. Geog.*, p. 265.

[3] 2 Sam. xxiii. 20.

[4] 1 Sam. xii. 17, 18.

[5] At Ghabaghib in Hauran on 19th, and Irbid in Gilead on 25th, June, temp. 48°. On mists and dews, cf. Book of Enoch lx.

Throughout the summer prairie and forest fires are not uncommon. The grass and thistle of the desert will blaze for miles, driving the scorpions and vipers from their holes as John the Baptist describes in one of his vivid figures ;[1] and sometimes, as the prophets tell us, the air is filled with the smoke of a whole wood.[2]

The Winds.

The winds of Syria are very regular, and their place obvious in the economy of her life. *He maketh His ministers of winds.*[3] They prevail from the west, and, with the help of the sea, they fulfil two great functions throughout the year. In the winter the west and south-west winds, damp from the sea, as they touch the cold mountains, drop their moisture and cause the winter rains. So our Lord said : *When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower, and so it is.*[4] In summer the winds blow chiefly out of the drier north-west, and meeting only warmth do not cause showers, but greatly mitigate the daily heat.[5] This latter function is even more regular than the former, for it is fulfilled morning by morning with almost perfect punctuality. Those who have not travelled through a Syrian summer can scarcely realise how welcome, how unfailing, a friend is the forenoon wind from the sea, how he is strongest just after noon, and does not leave you till the need for his freshness passes away with the sunset. He strikes the coast soon after sunrise ; in Hauran, in June and July, he used to reach

The Summer west wind.

[1] Luke iii. 7.
[2] Isa. v. 24 ; ix. 18 ; Joel i. 19 f. ; ii. 3.
[3] Ps. civ. 4 ; Book of Enoch lxxvi.
[4] Luke xii. 54.
[5] Ankel, *op. cit.*, pp. 84 ff, gives a number of figures for Jerusalem. From May to October dry winds blow from NW. 78·8 days ; from W. 27·5 ; from N. 26·5. In the rainy months W. and SW. winds blow for an average of 60·7 days, from NE., E., and SE., 67·4. For wind at Sarona see *P.E.F.Q.*, 1892.

us between 10 and 12 o'clock, and blew so well that the hours previous to that were generally the hottest of our day. The peasants do all their winnowing against this steady wind, and there is no happier scene in the land than afternoon on the threshing-floors, when he rustles the thickly-strewn sheaves, and scatters the chaff before him.[1]

The other winds are much more infrequent and irregular. From the north wind blows chiefly in October, and brings a dry cold.[2] The name Sherkiyeh, our Sirocco, literally 'the east,' is used of all winds blowing in from the desert—east, south-east, south, and even south-south-west. They are hot winds: *when ye see the south-wind blow, ye say, There will be heat, and it cometh to pass.*[3] They come with a mist of fine sand, veiling the sun, scorching vegetation, and bringing languor and fever to men. They are most painful airs, and if the divine economy were only for our physical benefit, inexplicable, for they neither carry rain nor help at harvest. *A dry wind of the high places in the wilderness toward the daughter of My people, neither to fan nor to cleanse.*[4] They blow chiefly in the spring, and for a day at a time. The following extracts, from our diary in 1891, will give some impression of what these hot sandy winds make of the atmosphere. It will

The Sirocco.

[1] The explanation of this daily wind is, of course, that the limestone of Syria heats up under the sun far more quickly than the sea, but after sunset cools again more rapidly, so that the night breezes, after an interval of great stillness just following sunset, blow in the opposite direction from the day ones. Ankel (*op cit.*, p. 85) rightly emphasises the importance of those daily winds. Robinson, *Phys. Geog.*, p. 278, remarks on their regularity. From June 3 to 16 they had the north-west wind 'from the time we left the Ghôr till we arrived at Nazareth. The air was fine and mostly clear, and, although the mercury ranged from 80° to 96°, the heat was not burdensome.' Yet at Ekron, under the same wind, the thermometer rose to 105°, and in the sun only to 108°.

[2] Job xxxvii. 9. Cf. Ankel, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

[3] Luke xii. 55.

[4] Jer. iv. 11. Cf. Ezek. xvii. 10; xix. 12; Hos. xiii. 15.

be noticed how readily they pass over into rain, by a slight change in the direction, from SSW. to full SW. :—

Edh-Dhaheriyah, Saturday, April 25 (in the Negeb, four hours south of Hebron), 8 P.M.—Night dark and clear, with moon in first quarter. Temp. 58° Fahr. ; 11 P.M. 62°, moon hazy.

Sunday.—8 A.M. 78°. Hot wind blowing from south, yet called Sherkeh or Sherkiyeh, *i.e.* east wind, by our men. Temperature rapidly rises to 88° at 10, and 90° at 12. Sky drumly all forenoon, but the sun casts shadows. Atmosphere thickening. At 1.45 wind rises, 93° ; 2.30, gale blowing, air filled with fine sand, horizon shortened to a mile, sun not visible, grey sky, but still a slight shadow cast by the tents. View from tent-door of light grey limestone land under dark grey sky, misty range of hills a mile away, and one camel visible ; 3.40, wind begins to moderate, temp. 93° ; 4.40, strong wind, half-gale, 83° ; 5 P.M., wind SSW., temp. 78°. Wind veers round a little further W. in the course of the evening ; 6 P.M. temp. 72° ; sunset, 68° ; 10.30 P.M., 63°. A slight shower of rain, stormy-looking night, with clouds gathering in from many quarters. The grey town's eastern face lit up by the moon, and very weird against the clouds, which are heaped together on the western sky, and also reflect the moonlight.

Monday, April 27.—Rain at intervals through the night, with high SW. wind endangering the tents ; 5.45 A.M. temp. 58°. Distant hills under mist, with the sun breaking through. Scudding showers, grey clouds, no blue sky. Impression of landscape as in Scottish uplands with little agriculture. Left camp 6.30. Most of the day dull and windy. Cleared up towards evening, with sunshine.

Here is another Sherkiyeh nearly three weeks later, in Samaria, between Sebastiyeh and Jenin :

May 11.—At Sebastiyeh at sunrise the temperature was only 48° with a slight west wind. Towards noon, under the same wind, it rose to 80°. But then the wind changed. A Sherkiyeh blew from SSE., and at 2 P.M., at our resting-place, Kubatiyeh, which is high and open, it was 92°. Sun veiled, afternoon dull.

At 5, at Jenin, 'En-gannîm, it was 88°, with more sunshine. At 10, it was still 84°. A few hours later we were wakened by cold. The wind had changed to the West, the temperature was 72°. At sunrise it was 68°.

These two instances—and between them we experienced two others at Jerusalem, one of which lasted for two days —will give the reader some idea of what is the east wind, or sirocco. It will be seen from them that in Palestine this wind does not inflict on men more than great discomfort, with a strong possibility of fever. In the desert, where the sand is loose, it is different: there have been cases in which whole caravans were overwhelmed by the sirocco between Egypt and Palestine; but once on the fertile hills, there is no danger to life from the sand-clouds, and the farther north they travel, the less disagreeable does their haze become.[1]

Yet sometimes the east wind breaks with great violence even on the coast. Tents may be carried away by wicked gusts.[2] It was to an east wind that Jeremiah likened the scattering of Israel, by an east wind that Ezekiel saw the ships of Tyre broken, and the Psalmist the ships of Tarshish.[3]

We have seen, then, how broken the surface of Palestine is; how opposite are its various aspects, seaward and towards the desert; how suddenly changing and how contrary its winds. All this will have prepared us for the fact that its differences of temperature are also very great — great between one part of the country and another, great between summer and winter, but relatively greater between day and night

Temp rature.

[1] Cf. Robinson, *Phys. Geog.* pp. 279, 280. [2] Lynch, *Official Report*, p. 74.
[3] Jer. xviii. 17; Ezek. xxvii. 26; cf. xix. 12; Ps. xlviii. 7; Jos. xiv *Ant.* ii. 2.

and between one part of the day and another. Here are some instances: On one of his journeys, Robinson experienced in May, in the mountains of Judæa, a pleasant temperature of from 80° to 96° under a fresh west wind; but at Ekron in the plain, though the wind was the same, the heat had risen to 105°, and the sultry air had all the characteristics of a sirocco. Coming down from the plateau of Moab to the Jordan, on July 7th, we found the temperature at Heshbon at 9 A.M., when the sun was near his full strength, only 76°; but on the edge of the Ghôr at noon it was 103°; on Jordan, at 2.30 P.M., 101°; and at Jericho throughout the night not less than 89°. On the heights of Gadara, from the afternoon of the 23rd to the forenoon of the 27th June, the mid-day temperature had ranged under the west wind from 82° to 90°, the evening temperature (between 6 and 10 P.M.) from 70° to 76°, while the lowest morning temperature just before sunrise was 65°. But at the sulphur baths of Hammath, just below Gadara, the mid-day temperature on the 24th of June was 100°, and at 3 P.M. still 96°; while at Pella, near the Jordan Valley, on the 28th and 29th June, we had a mid-day temperature from 98° to 101°, a sunrise temperature of 74°, and at 10 P.M. 78°. Yet after we rose, on the evening of the 29th, to the Wady Yabis in Gilead, at 10 P.M., it was only 69°, and next mid-day at Ajlun 86°, and at 10 P.M. 64°, and at sunrise next morning 58°. These are changes between different localities, but even at the same spot the range in temperature is great. We have seen that caused by the sirocco—in one instance from 48° at sunrise to 92° by 2 P.M. But take an instance when there was no sirocco. On the 23rd of April, at Beit-Jibrin at

Its extremes.

sunrise, the thermometer stood at 42°; from 11 to 3 it ranged over 85°. At Laish it sank, in a storm of wind and rain, from 88° to 72° in very little over a quarter of an hour; but changes as sudden, and even more extreme, are not uncommon down the whole of the Jordan Valley.[1]

But these extremes of heat which in summer surround the Central Range of Palestine, and these ample changes of temperature must not be allowed to confuse our minds with regard to the temperate and equable climate which this part of the land, Israel's proper territory, enjoys throughout the year. In all the world there are few healthier homes. The mean annual temperature varies from 62° to 68°. Except when the sirocco blows, the warmest days of summer seldom exceed 90°, and the cold of winter still more seldom falls to freezing-point, February is the coldest month, with a mean temperature of about 46°. Through March and April this rises from 54° to 61°; in May and June from 65° to 74°; July and August, 76°; September and October, 75° to 68°. After the rains there is a fall in November to about 60°, and in December to 52°. The snows, the less sunshine, and the cold north-east winds, are sufficient to account for the further fall in January to 49°.[2]

We have now carefully surveyed the rains, winds, and temperatures of Palestine. For the mass of the land lifted from 1000 to 2000 feet above the sea, the result is a temperate climate, with the annual seasons perhaps more

[1] Lynch's *Narrative*; cf. Daily Range, Sarona, *P.E.F.Q.*, 1891; Jerus., *id.*, 1893. On Tiberias, *P.E.F.Q.*, 1896, p. 92; cf. below, Additional Note to 441.

[2] These figures are arrived at after a comparison of Barclay's for the years 1851 to 1855 (*City of the Great King*, p. 428), and those given by Chaplin, *P.E.F.Q.*, 1883, and Glaisher, *id.*, 1893-4. Cf. Wittmann, 561-570.

regular, but the daily variations of heat certainly much greater, than is the case throughout the most of the temperate zone. On her hills and table-lands Israel enjoyed all the advantages of a healthy and bracing climate, with the addition of such stimulus and strain as come from a considerable range of the daily temperature, as well as from the neighbourhood of extreme heat, in the Jordan Valley and in the Western Plain, to which the business of their life obliged most of the nation very frequently to descend. Some tribes suffered these changes of temperature more regularly than others. Most subject to them were the highlanders of Mount Ephraim, who had fields in the Jordan Valley, and the Galileans, whose province included both the heights of Naphtali and the tropical basin in which the Lake of Galilee lies. In their journeys through this land—from the Jordan to Cana, from Nazareth to Capernaum, from Capernaum to the highlands of Cæsarea Philippi—our Lord and His disciples, often with no roof to cover their heads at night, must have felt the full range of the ample Syrian temperature. But these are the conditions which breed a hardy and an elastic frame of body. The national type, which was formed in them for nearly two millennia, was certain to prove at once tough and adaptable. To the singular variety of the climate in which the Jewish nation grew up we may justly trace much of the physical persistence and versatility which has made Jews at home in every quarter of the globe. This is something very different from the purely Semitic frame of body, which has been tempered only by the monotonous conditions of the desert. The Arab has never proved himself so successful a colonist as the Jew. And we have in these times another

Racial effect of the climate.

instance of the tempering influences of the climate of Palestine. The emigration of Syrians from the Turkish Empire is steadily proceeding, and the Syrians are making good colonists in America and in Australia.

There is one other effect of the climate of the Holy Land which is quite as important. It is a climate which lends itself to the service of moral ideas.

In the first place, it is not mechanically regular. Unlike that of Egypt, the climate of Syria does not depend upon a few simple and unfailing phenomena—upon one great instrument like the Nile to whose operations man has but to link his own and the fruits of the year are inevitable. In the Palestine year there is no inevitableness. Fertility does not spring from a source which is within control of man's spade, and by which he can defy a brazen and illiberal heaven. It comes down from heaven, and if heaven sometimes withholds it, there is nothing else within man's reach to substitute for it. The climate of Palestine is regular enough to provoke men to methodical labour for its fruits, but the regularity is often interrupted. The early rains or the latter rains fail, drought comes occasionally for two years in succession, and that means famine and pestilence. There are, too, the visitations of the locust, which are said to be bad every fifth or sixth year; and there are earthquakes, also periodical in Syria. Thus a purely mechanical conception of nature as something certain and inevitable, whose processes are more or less under man's control, is impossible; and the imagination is roused to feel the presence of a will behind nature, in face of whose interruptions of the fruitfulness or stability of the land man is absolutely helpless. To such a climate, then, is partly

Climate not mechanically regular.

due Israel's doctrine of Providence. The author of the Book of Deuteronomy, to whom we owe so much insight into the religious influences of the Promised Land, emphasises this by contrasting the land with Egypt. *For the land, whither thou goest in to possess it, is not like the land of Egypt, whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs*—that is, where everything is so much under man's control, where man has all nature at his foot like a little garden, where he has but to link himself to the mechanical processes of nature, and the fruits of the year are inevitable. *But the land, whither ye are passing over to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, of the rain of heaven it drinketh water: a land which Jehovah thy God* Himself *looketh after; continually are the eyes of Jehovah thy God upon it, from the beginning of the year, even to the end of the year.* That is, the climate of Egypt is not one which of itself suggests a personal Providence, but the climate of Palestine does so. *And it shall be, if ye indeed hearken to my commandments, which I am commanding you to-day, to love Jehovah your God, to worship Him with all your heart, and with all your soul, that then I will give the rain of the land in its season—early rain and latter rain,—and thou shalt gather thy corn and thine oil. And I will give grass in thy fields for thy cattle, and thou shalt eat and be full. Take heed to yourselves, lest your heart be beguiled, and ye turn aside and worship other gods and bow down to them; and the wrath of Jehovah grow hot against you, and He shut up the heaven, that there be no rain, and the ground yield not her increase; and ye perish off the good land which Jehovah is giving you* (Deut. xi.).

The Climate and Providence.

In Deuteronomy.

Two remarkable passages in the prophets give us instances of this general principle. Through Amos Jehovah reminds His people of recent drought, famine, mildew and blasting, pestilence and earthquake, and reproaches them that after each of these they did not return to Him:[1] *yet have ye not returned unto Me, saith Jehovah.* And Isaiah, perhaps alluding to the same series of climatic disturbances, speaks in a different order, of earthquake, drought with forest fires and a famine, and complains that, in spite of them, the people are still impenitent: *for all this His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still.*[2]

In Amos and Isaiah.

It was a moral Providence, then, which the prophets read in the climate of their land. Now, there were features in this which of themselves might suggest such a reading. The hardness of man's life even in the best of seasons, for Palestine needs persistent toil to be fruitful, the presence of the desert, the drought, the earthquake, the locusts—these spontaneously suggest a purpose at work for other than material ends. But Israel could not have read in them the high moral Providence which she did read, with a God of another character than Jehovah. Look at her neighbours. They experienced the same droughts, thunderstorms and earthquakes; but these do not appear to have suggested to them any other ideas than the wrath of the Deity, who had therefore to be propitiated by the horrible sacrifices of manhood, feminine purity and child life, which have made their

Uniqueness of Israel's doctrine of Providence.

[1] Amos iv. 6-11.

[2] Isaiah v. 25, ix. 8-21, v. 26-30. These passages are connected by the same refrain, they belong to the same series, and must originally have stood together. We need not suppose that either prophet was bound to follow the real sequence. Amos puts famine before drought.

religions so revolting. Israel also felt God was angry, but because He was such a God, and had revealed Himself as He had done in the past, they knew that He punished them through their climate, not to destroy, but to warn and turn, his rebel folk. The Syrian year and its interruptions play an equal part in the Phœnician religions and in the Hebrew prophets' doctrine of Providence. But while in the former they lead to mutilation and horrible sacrifices, in the latter they are the reminder that man does not live by the bread of the year alone: they are calls to conscience, to repentance, to purity. And what makes the difference on that same soil, and under those same heavens, is the character of Israel's God. All the Syrian religions reflect the Syrian climate; Israel alone interprets it for moral ends, because Israel alone has a God who is absolute righteousness.

Here, then, is another of those many points at which the Geography of Syria exhausts the influence of the material and the seen, and indicates the presence on the land of the unseen and the spiritual.

II. The Fertility of the Land.

The long rainy season in Palestine means a considerable rainfall,[1] and while it lasts the land gets a thorough soaking. Every highland gorge, every lowland valley-bed—nearly every one of those wadies which are dry in summer, and to the traveller at that season seem the channels of some ancient and forgotten flood—is filled annually with a roaring

Winter rains and Summer drought.

[1] Annual rainfall at Nazareth is about 61 centimetres; at Jerusalem, 57; while at Athens it is 40; Constantinople, 70; Vienna, 44; London, 58; Paris, 50; Rome, 80.—So Anderlind, *Z.D.P.V.*, viii. 101 ff. Cf. *P.E.F.Q.* 1894.

torrent, while many of the high meadows are lakes, and plains like Esdraelon become in part quagmires. But the land is limestone and very porous. The heavy rains are quickly drained away, the wadies are left dry, the lakes become marshes, or dwindle to dirty ponds,[1] and on the west of Jordan there remain only a very few short perennial streams, of which but one or two, and these mere rills, are found in the hill-country. At the foot of the hills, however, there burst forth all through the summer not only such springs as we have in our own land, but large and copious fountains, from three to twenty feet in breadth, and one to three feet in depth—some with broad pools full of fish, and some sending forth streams strong enough to work mills a few yards away. These fountain-heads, as they are called,[2] are very characteristic features of the Syrian summer; in the midst of the dust and rust of the rest of the land they surprise you with their wealth of water and rank vegetation. They are chiefly found at the foot of Hermon, where three of them give birth to the Jordan, along both bases of the Central Range, in the Jordan Valley and the Western Plain, and in Esdraelon at the foot of Gilboa and of the Samaritan hills. There are smaller editions of them among the hills of Galilee and Samaria, but in the table-land of Judæa the springs are few and meagre, and the inhabitants store the winter rain in pits, partly natural, partly built. On the plains water may be got in most places by boring and pumping.[3]

The Summer wells.

[1] Very occasionally these winter lakes will be large through the whole summer. The Merj el Ghuruk, when we passed it in May 1891, was a very extensive lake. So with Buttauf in Galilee.

[2] Ras el 'Ain.

[3] The presence of 'Ain, *well* or *spring*, in place-names is very common.

On the east of the Jordan water is much more plentiful. There are several long perennial rivers draining the eastern desert, and watering all the plateaus between it and the Jordan Valley, the eastern half of which might easily be irrigated by them in its entire extent. Springs are more frequent, and, although streams are fewer to the north of the Yarmuk than to the south, the soil on the north is deep volcanic mould on a basalt basis, and holds its winter moisture far longer than the limestone.

Water East of Jordan.

The distribution of water, then, unequal as it is, is another factor in heightening the complexity of this land of contrasts. Take it along with the immense differences of level and temperature, with the differences of aspect, seaward and to the desert, and you begin to understand what a mixture of

Inequality of distribution of water.

but we must not infer from this that living water is present. It is not so at 'Ain Shems; at 'Ain Sinia there is only a bîr, or cistern of rain-water (Robinson, *Phys. Geog.*, 219, 220). At the foot of the hills the chief large fountains that are characteristic of Syria are the following:—On the Western Plain, between Tyre and Akkah at Ras el 'Ain, at 'Ain el Musheirifeh, at El-Kabîreh, at Birweh, and at Tell Kûrdâny, the source of the Belus. Along north base of Carmel the Kishon is fed by copious springs. South of Carmel we have the sources of the Zerka, Subbarin and Umm-esh Shukaf, whence aqueducts went to Cæsarea, and some other spots at the roots of the Samarian hills, like Ras el 'Ain, whence the 'Aujeh flows. In the Shephelah there are several wells; water can always be got by boring on the Philistine plain; Askalon and Gaza are noted for their wells, and the wadies near the sea have fresh water for most of the year. The streams in the Negeb are only winter streams (Psalm cxxvi.); the wells are few. Along the western base of the Judæan range are some copious fountains, chiefly at faults in the strata in the gorges leading up to the plateau, *e.g.* 'Ain el Kuf, in the W. el Kuf. In a cave in a gorge off W. en Najil I found abundance of water in May. The Judæan plateau has many cisterns and pools, but few springs, and almost no large ones. There are two springs between Edh-Dhaheriyah and Hebron—perhaps *the upper and nether springs* of Caleb (Josh. xv. 19); twelve small springs about Hebron, and over thirty have been counted within a radius of ten miles from Jerusalem, but only those at King Solomon's Pools yield a considerable quantity of water. Samaria is more

soils Palestine is, and how her fauna and flora range along every degree between the Alpine and tropical, between the forms of the Mediterranean basin and those of desert life, while she still cherishes, in that peculiar deep trench down the middle of her, animals and plants related to those of distant lands, with which in previous geological periods she had closer relations.

As to soils, every reader of the Bible is made to feel how near in Palestine the barren lies to the fruitful. Apart from the desert proper, which comes up almost to the gates of the Judæan cities, how much land is described as only pasture, and this so dry that there is constant strife for the wells upon it? How often do we hear of *the field*, the rough, uncultivated, but not wholly barren, bulk of the hill-country, where the

The Soil.

favoured, especially at Khan Lubban, the W. Kanah, Salim, Nablus (where the deep vale between Gerizim and Ebal has running water all the year round), Fendakumieh, Jeba, Tell Dothan, Lejjun, and Jenîn. On the northern base of Gilboa there are 'Ain Jalûd and three other fountains, making a considerable stream. In Galilee there are springs at Shunem, Khan el Tajjar (two, one large), Hattîn (large), Nazareth, Seffurïeh (large), Gischala, Tibnîn, Kedesh (two, both large), and other places. Along the eastern base of the Central Range, in the Ghôr, are many large and very copious fountains—most of them more or less brackish and warm—opposite Merom, 'Amudîyeh, Belâteh, Mellâhah, all copious, with streams; the last two very large, then the smaller Mughâr and Kubâ'a. On the eastern shore of the Lake el Tâbighah, a fount with stream, 'Ain et Tîneh and Mudawârah, with large pools; 'Ain el Bâridah, with small pools; the hot springs at the Baths of Tiberias; about Beisan many springs and thence down the Jordan at frequent intervals, especially at Sakût, W. Malih (salt and warm), Kerawa, Fusaîl, 'Aujeh, 'Ain Duk, 'Ain es Sultan (near Jericho), 'Ain Hajla, out on the plain. And along the coast of the Dead Sea Jehâir, Feshkhah (both brackish and warm), Ghuweir (small), Terâbeh, 'Ain Jidy, and 'Areijeh, whose streams are copious, produce thickets and fields, but are lost even before the sea is reached. Of longer streams from the west the Jordan receives the Jalûd at Bethshean, the Fari'ah, and the Kelt—the first two perennial, the last almost so. The waters on the Eastern Range will be treated further on.

beasts of the field, that is, wild beasts, found sufficient room to breed and become a serious hindrance, from first to last, to Israel's conquest of the land.[1] This *field* is a great element in the Old Testament landscape, and we recognise it to-day in the tracts of moorland, hillside and summit, jungle and bare rock, which make up so much of the hill-country, and can never have been cultivated even for vines. How much of this *field* was forest must remain a debateable question. On the one hand, where there are now only some fragments of wood, writers, even down to the Crusades, describe large forests like that of Northern Sharon ; the word for wood occurs in place-names, where there are now few trees, as in Judæa and Jaulan ; you see enormous roots here and there even on the bare plateau of Judæa ; palm groves have disappeared from the Jordan Valley, and elsewhere you may take for granted that the Turk has not left the land so well wooded as he found it. On the other hand, copse and wood cover many old clearings as on Carmel ; on the Central Range, the Old Testament speaks only of isolated large trees, of copses and small woods, but looks for its ideal forests to Gilead, Bashan, and Lebanon ; and there is very little mention of the manufacture of large native wood.[2]

The Field.

Woodland.

The truth is, that the conditions for the growth of such large forests as we have in Europe and America, are not present in Palestine : the Hebrew word we translate *forest*

[1] Field, שׂדה, is used not only for this wild moorland and hillside, but also for cultivated soil, and for the territory belonging to a town.

[2] Isaiah ix. 10. For the temple cedar was imported from Lebanon. The Israelites do not appear to have used coffins, 2 Kings xiii. 21 ; cf. Ankel, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

ought to be *woodland*, and perhaps only *copse* or *jungle*,[1] and we may safely conclude that the land was never very much more wooded than it is to-day. The distribution of woodland may have been different, but the woods were what we find the characteristic Palestine wood still to be—open and scattered, the trees distinguished rather for thickness than height, and little undergrowth when compared with either a northern or a tropical forest.[2] Here and there groves of larger trees, or solitary giants of their kind, may have stood conspicuous on the bare landscape. The chief forest trees are several varieties of oak, including the ilex, of terebinth,[3] and carob, and box that grows to a height of twenty feet, with a few pines and cypresses, and by water plane trees. All these were *trees of God*, that is, planted by Him and not by man. The only others of equal size were the walnut, mentioned by Josephus as numerous above the Lake of Galilee, and the sycomore, used for both its fruit and its timber.[4] But these were cultivated. The acacia or shittim-wood is common towards the desert.

Trees.

Next to the woods of Palestine, a high thick bush forms one of her sylvan features. It consists of dwarf oak, terebinth and pine, dwarf wild olive, wild vine, arbutus and myrtle, juniper and thorn. This mixture of degraded forms of forest and fruit-trees represents both the remains of former woods and the sites of

Bush.

[1] יַעַר. The corresponding Arabic *wa'ar* is rocky ground.

[2] Yet Richard's army found the undergrowth very difficult in the forest of Sharon. Vinsauf, *Itin. Ricardi*, iv. 12.

[3] It is often impossible to tell whether oak or terebinth is meant in the Old Testament. There are four words, אֵלָה and אַלָּה ; אֵלוֹן and אַלּוֹן.

[4] Amos vii. 14 ; Isaiah ix. 9 (*E.V.* 10) ; 1 Kings x. 27 ; 1 Chron. xxvii. (xxviii.) 28 ; 2 Chron. i. 15 ; Luke xix. 4.

abandoned cultivation. In the bush the *forest* and the *garden* meet half way. Sometimes old oil and wine-presses are found beneath it, sometimes great trees, survivors of old woods, tower above it. A few wadies in Western Palestine, and many in Eastern, are filled with oleanders, ribbons of pink across the landscape. Willows are common, so are cane-brakes where there is water. The rank jungle of the Jordan and the stunted flora of the desert fall to be separately described.

If Palestine be not a land of forests, it is a land of orchards. Except chestnuts, which singularly enough are not found here, all the fruit-trees of the temperate zone flourish in Syria. The most common are the apricot, 'to Syria what the fig is to Smyrna and Ephesus,' figs themselves, the orange, citron, pomegranate, mulberry, pistachio, almond, and walnut.[1] The sycomore, which is very easily grown, is cultivated for its timber and its rough tasteless figs, which, as well as the carob fruit, are eaten by the very poor.[2] The date-palm used to be cultivated in large groves both on the Maritime Plain and in the Jordan Valley, where it might still be cultivated.[3] Near Jericho, large balsam groves were farmed down to Roman times.[4] But the two chief fruit-trees of Palestine are, of course, the olive and the vine, the olive certainly native to Syria, and the vine probably so. The cultivation of the former has been

Fruit-trees.

Olive and Vine.

[1] Tristram, *Natural History of the Bible.* Cf. Anderlind, *Die Fruchtbäume in Syrien insbesondere Palästina, Z.D.P.V.* xi. 69. Plums, pears, and apples are seldom found in Palestine proper. Cherries are only lately introduced.

[2] Amos was a gatherer of sycomore figs, vii. 14; the carob fruit was the food of the Prodigal, Luke xv. 16.

[3] See below, pp. 267, 271, 354 note.

[4] *Balsamodendron Gileadense*, still growing in Southern Syria. Cf. Jer. viii. 22. See below, p. 266, note 4.

sustained to the present day, and was probably never much greater than it is now. That of the vine is being greatly revived. The disappearance of vineyards and not of forests is the difference with which we have to reckon in the landscape of Palestine. Innumerable hillsides, not capable of other cultivation, which were terraced with green vineyards to their summit, now in their ruin only exaggerate the stoniness of the land.[1] But the Germans on Mount Carmel and in Judæa, some French firms, and the Jesuits in the Bek'a between the Lebanons are fast changing all this. At Salt there has always been, as there is now, a great cultivation of grapes for manufacture into raisins.[2]

Grain.

The cultivation of grain was confined to the lower plateaus, the broader valleys, and the plains. At this day the best wheat-fields are Philistia, Esdraelon, the Mukhneh to the east of Nablus, and Hauran. The wheat of the latter, springing from volcanic soil, is famed throughout the East.[3] Barley, given to horses and other beasts of burden, was the despised food of the poorer peasants, or of the whole nation when the Arabs drove them from the plains to the hills. It was in the shape of a poor barley cake that the Midianite dreamt he saw Israel rolling down from the hills and overturning his camp on Esdraelon.[4] Oats were not grown, but millet was common in ancient times, and maize is now. Beans, pulse, and lentils were largely grown. Garden vegetables thrive richly wherever there is summer irrigation—tomatoes, onions, cucumbers, pumpkins, and melons chiefly in the plains, but we received all these fruits from the peasants

[1] See the chapter on Judæa.
[2] See Additional Notes to Fourth Edition.
[3] See the chapter on Hauran.
[4] Judges vii. 13.

of Gilead and the Bedouin of Moab.[1] It is doubtful whether the sugar-cane was known.[2]

There is, of course, no turf in Palestine, and very little grass that lasts through the summer. After the rains, *the field* springs thick with grasses and wild grains of many kinds,[3] some clover, lupins, many succulent plants, aromatic herbs, lilies, anemones, and hosts of other wild-flowers, but early summer sees much of this withered away. Lupins, clover and other plants are sometimes cultivated for fodder; but cattle and sheep alike must trust to the wild pasture, over whose meagre and interrupted vegetation their range has to be very large. Only by the great fountains and pools can they find rich unfading grass throughout the year.

Pasture.

Such, then, is the fertility of the Holy Land in forest, orchard, and field. To a western eye it must, at certain seasons of the year, seem singularly meagre and uninfluential—incapable of stirring the imagination, or enriching the life of a people. Yet come in, with the year at the flood, with the springing of the grain, with the rush of colour across the field, the flush of green on the desert, and in imagination clothe again the stony terraces with the vines which in ancient times trailed from foot to summit of many of the hills—then, even though your eye be western, you will feel the charm and intoxication of the land. It is not, however, the western eye we have to consider. It is the

[1] The potato, I think, has just been introduced to Syria.

[2] Isaiah xliii. 24; Jeremiah vi. 20. Eng. *Sweet Cane*; but, according to most authorities, identical with the Calamus (Exod. xxx. 23; Ezek. xxvii. 19), a kind of spice, probably imported.

[3] Three Hebrew words are translated grass: ירק, Jerek, which means any green herb: דשא, Déshè, which is our grass proper; חציר, Haṣṣir, which is cut grass or hay. Hay is infrequent, cf. Buhl, *Geogr.* p. 56, note 33.

effect of this fertility on the desert nomads from whom, as we have seen, the population of Syria was chiefly drawn. If even at the season of its annual ebb the fertility of the whole land affords a certain contrast to the desert—how much more must its eastern forests, its immense wheat-fields, its streams, the oases round its perennial fountains, the pride of Jordan, impress the immigrant nomad. If he settles down among them, how wholly must they alter his mode of life!

Effect of the Syrian fertility on the Nomad.

The fertility of the Holy Land affected immigrants from the desert, among whom Israel were the chief, in two ways. It meant to them at once an ascent in civilisation and a fall in religion.

1. It meant a rise in civilisation. To pass from the desert into Syria is to leave the habits of the nomadic life for those of the agricultural. The process may be gradual, and generally has been so, but the end is inevitable. Immigrant tribes, with their herds and tents, may roam even the Syrian fields for generations, but at last they settle down in villages and townships. The process can be illustrated all down the history of Syria: it can be seen at work to-day. Israel also passed through it, and the passage made them a nation. From a series of loosely-connected pastoral clans, they became a united people, with a definite territory, and its culture as the means of their life. The story is told in two passages of such great beauty that I translate the whole of them. The first is from the Song of Moses, and the other from the Blessing of the Tribes—in chapters xxxii. and xxxiii. of the Book of Deuteronomy. It is to be noticed that

A rise in civilisation.

Israel's passage from the nomadic stage to the agricultural.

neither of them carries the origin of Israel further back than the desert. Neither of them even hints at the sojourn of the people in Egypt. Israel is a purely desert tribe, who by the inspiration of Jehovah are stirred up to leave their desert home, and settle as agriculturists in Palestine:

Remember the days of old,
Consider the years of generation on generation.
Ask thy father and he will show thee,
Thine elders and they will tell thee.
When the Highest gave nations their heritage,
When He sundered the children of men.
He set the border of the tribes,[1]
By the number of the children of Israel.
For the portion of Jehovah is His people,
Jacob the measure of His heritage.
He found him in a land of the desert,
In a waste, in a howling wilderness.
He encompassed him, He distinguished him,
He watched him as the apple of His eye.
As an eagle stirreth his nest,
Fluttereth over his young,
Spreadeth abroad his wings, taketh them,
Beareth them up on his pinions,
Jehovah alone led him
And no strange god was with him.
He made him to ride on the Land's high places,
And to eat of the growth of the field.
He gave him to suck honey from the cliff,
And oil from the flinty rock.
Cream of kine and milk of sheep,
With lambs' fat and rams',
Breed of Bashan and he-goats,
With fat of the kidneys of wheat;
And the blood of the grape thou drankest in foam!

How could the passage from the nomadic life to the agricultural be more vividly expressed than by this figure of a brood of desert birds stirred to leave their nest by the father bird! The next poem is full of the same ideas—

[1] Lit., peoples.

that it was in the wilderness Jehovah met the people, that their separate tribes first became a nation by their settlement in Canaan, and the new habits which its fertility imposed on them :

Jehovah from Sinai hath come,
And risen from Seir upon them ;
He shone from Mount Paran,
And broke from Meribah of Qadesh.[1]
From the South[2] *fire . . . to them.*
Also He loved His people,
All His saints were in thy hand (?),
They pressed to thy feet (?),
They took of His words.[3]
Law did Moses command us,
A Domain had the congregation of Jacob,—
So he became king in Jeshurun,
When the heads of the people were gathered,
When the tribes of Israel were one.

* * * * * * *

There is none like the God of Jeshurun,
Riding the heavens to thy help,
And the clouds in His highness !
A refuge is the everlasting God,
And beneath are the arms of eternity.
And he drove from before thee the foe,
And he said—Destroy !
So Israel dwelt in safety,
Secluded was Jacob's fount.
In a land of corn and wine,
Also His heavens dropped dew.
Happy thou, Israel ! Who is like unto thee !
People saved by Jehovah,
The shield of thy help,
Yea, the sword of thy highness ;
And thy foes shall fawn on thee,[4]
And thou—on their heights shalt thou march !

[1] Text slightly altered (partly after the LXX.) gives this true parallel to the other lines.

[2] Reading very corrupt. I suggest *the south* as a parallel to the other lines.

[3] LXX., these lines are very uncertain.

[4] To adopt the happy translation of Mr. Addis.

2. But this rise from the nomadic level to the agricultural, which the passage from the desert into Syria implied, this ascent in social life, meant at the same time almost inevitably a descent in religion.

Religious consequences of the fertility.

It is very intelligible. The creed of the desert nomad is simple and austere—for nature about him is monotonous, silent, and illiberal. But Syria is a land of lavish gifts and oracles—where woods are full of mysterious speech, and rivers burst suddenly from the ground, where the freedom of nature excites, and seems to sanction, the passions of the human body, where food is rich, and men drink wine. The spirit and the senses are equally taken by surprise. No one can tell how many voices a tree has who has not come up to it from the silence of the great desert. No one may imagine how 'possessed' a landscape can feel—as if singled out and endowed by some divinity for his own domain and residence—who has not, across the forsaken plateaus of Moab or Anti-Lebanon, fallen upon one of the sudden Syrian rivers, with its wealth of water and of verdure.

But with the awe comes the sense of indulgence, and the starved instincts of the body break riotously forth. It is said that Mohammed, upon one of his journeys out of Central Arabia, was taken to look upon Damascus. He gazed, but turned away, and would not enter the city. 'Man,' he said, 'can have but one Paradise, and mine is above.' It may be a legend, but it is a true symbol of the effect which Syria exercises on the imagination of every nomad who crosses her border.

All this is said to have happened to Israel from almost their first encampment in Canaan. *Israel settled in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters*

of Moab . . . Israel joined himself to Baal-peor. And still more, when they settled on the west of the Jordan among the Canaanites, and had fully adopted the life of the land, did they lapse into polytheism, and the sensuous Canaanite ritual. In every favoured spot of the land their predecessors had felt a Ba'al, a Lord or Possessor, to whom the place was Be'ulah, subject or married, and to these innumerable Ba'alim they turned aside. *They went astray on every high hill, and under every green tree,*[1] *. . . they did according to all the abominations of the nations which the Lord cast out before the children of Israel.*[2] The poem which we have already quoted directly connects this lapse into idolatry with the change from the nomadic to the agricultural life. These next lines follow on immediately to the lines on p. 86 :

Israel's fall into polytheism.

And Jeshurun waxed fat, and struck out
—Thou art fat, thou art thick, thou art sleek !—
And cast off the God that had made him,
And despised the Rock of his salvation.
They moved him to jealousy with strange gods,
With abominations provoked Him to anger.
They sacrificed to monsters undivine,
Gods they had known not,
New things, lately come in,
Their fathers never had them in awe.
Of the Rock that bare thee thou wast unmindful,
And forgattest the God who gave thee birth.

All this makes two things clear to us. The conception of Israel's early history which prevails in Deuteronomy, viz., that the nation suffered a declension from a pure and simple estate of life and religion, to one which was gross and

[1] The worship of the host of heaven did not become general in Israel till the ninth and eighth centuries.

[2] 1 Kings xiv. 23, 24. Cf. 2 Kings xvii. 9-12; Hos. ix. 10.

sensuous, from the worship of their own deity to the worship of many local gods, is justified in the main—I do not say in details, but in the main—by the geographical data, and by what we know to have been the influence of these at all periods in history. And, secondly, this survey of the fertility of Syria, and of its social and religious influences, must surely have made very clear to us how unlikely a soil this was for monotheism to spring from. We must feel that it has brought out into relief the presence and the power of those spiritual forces, which, in spite of the opposition of nature, did create upon Syria the monotheistic creed of Israel.

The marvel of monotheism in Syria.

CHAPTER IV

THE SCENERY OF THE LAND AND ITS REFLECTION IN THE BIBLE



THE SCENERY OF THE LAND AND ITS REFLECTION IN THE BIBLE

IT has grown the fashion to despise the scenery of Palestine. The tourist, easily saddle-sore and missing the comforts of European travel, finds the landscape deteriorate almost from the moment he leaves the orange-groves of Jaffa behind him, and arrives in the north with a disappointment which Lebanon itself cannot appease. The Plain is commonplace, the glens of Samaria only 'pretty,' but the Judæan table-land revolting in its stony dryness, and the surroundings of the Lake of Galilee feverish and glaring. Now it is true that the greater part of Palestine, like some other countries not unknown for beauty, requires all the ornament which cultivation can give it, and it has been deprived of this. The land has been stripped and starved, its bones protrude, in parts it is very bald—a carcase of a land, if you like, from some points of view, and especially when the clouds lower, or the sirocco throws dust across the sun. Yet, even as it lies to-day, there are, in the Holy Land, some prospects as bold and rich as any you will see in countries famed for their picturesqueness. There is the coast-line from the headland of Carmel—northwards the Gulf of Haifa, with its yellow sands and palms, across them brown, crumbling Acre, and in the haze the white

Picturesque Palestine.

Ladder of Tyre: southwards Sharon with her scattered forest, her coast of sand and grass, and the haggard ruins of Athlit—last foothold of the Crusaders: westwards the green sea and the wonderful shadows of the clouds upon it—grey when you look at them with your face to the sun, but, with the sun behind you, purple, and more like Homer's 'wine-coloured' water than anything I have seen on the Mediterranean. There is the *excellency of Carmel* itself: wheat-fields climbing from Esdraelon to the first bare rocks, then thick bush and scrub, young ilex, wild olives and pines, with undergrowth of large purple thistles, mallows with blossoms like pelargoniums, stocks of hollyhock, golden broom, honeysuckle and convolvulus —then, between the shoulders of the mountain, olive-groves, their dull green mass banked by the lighter forest trees, and on the flanks the broad lawns, where in the shadow of great oaks you look far out to sea. There is the Lake of Galilee as you see it from Gadara, with the hills of Naphtali above it, and Hermon filling all the north. There is the perspective of the Jordan Valley as you look up from over Jericho, between the bare ranges of Gilead and Ephraim, with the winding ribbon of the river's jungle, and the top of Hermon like a white cloud in the infinite distance. There is the forest of Gilead, where you ride, two thousand feet high, under the boughs of great trees creaking and rustling in the wind, with all Western Palestine before you. There is the moonlight view out of the bush on the northern flank of Tabor, the leap of the sun over the edge of Bashan, summer morning in the Shephelah, and sunset over the Mediterranean, when you see it from the gateway of the ruins on Samaria down the glistening Vale of Barley. Even in the barest

provinces you get many a little picture that lives with you for life — a chocolate-coloured bank with red poppies against the green of the prickly pear hedge above it, and a yellow lizard darting across; a river-bed of pink oleanders flush with the plain ; a gorge in Judæa, where you look up between limestone walls picked out with tufts of grass and black-and-tan goats cropping at them, the deep blue sky over all, and, on the edge of the only shadow, a well, a trough, and a solitary herdsman.

And then there are those prospects in which no other country can match Palestine, for no other has a valley like the Ghôr, or a desert like that which falls from Judæa to the Dead Sea.[1] There is the view from the Mount of Olives, down twenty miles of desert hill-tops to the deep blue waters, with the wall of Moab glowing on the further side like burnished copper, and staining the blue sea red with its light. There is the view of the Dead Sea through the hazy afternoon, when across the yellow foreground of Jeshimon the white Lisan rises like a pack of Greenland ice from the blue waters, and beyond it the Moab range, misty, silent, and weird. There are the precipices of Masada and Engedi sheer from the salt coast. And, above all, there is the view from Engedi under the full moon, when the sea is bridged with gold, and the eastern mountains are black with a border of opal.

But, whether there be beauty or not, there is always on all the heights that sense of space and distance which comes from Palestine's high position between the great desert and the great sea.

[1] De Saulcy calls the Dead Sea, 'le lac le plus imposant et le plus beau qui existe sur la terre.'—*Voyage autour de la Mer Morte*, i. 154.

Of all this, such use was made by Israel as served the expression of her high ideals, or was necessary in the description of her warfare. Israel was a nation of prophets and warriors. But prophets, like lovers, offer you no more reflection of nature than as she sympathises with their passion ; nor warriors, except as they wait impatiently for her omens, or are excited by her freshness and motion, or lay down their tactics by her contours. *Let it be when thou hearest the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then thou bestir thyself, for then shall Jehovah have gone out before thee to smite the host of the Philistines.*[1]

Its reflection in Israel's war-songs.

The torrent of Kishon swept them away,
That torrent of spates, torrent Kishon.[2]

My God, make them like a whirl of dust,
Like the stubble before the wind;
As a fire burneth a wood
And as flame setteth the mountains afire.[3]

And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove,
I would fly away and be at rest!
I would hasten my escape
From the windy storm and tempest.[4]

The God of my rock; in Him will I trust:
My shield, and the horn of my salvation,
My high tower and my refuge.
He matcheth my feet to hinds' feet;
He setteth me upon my high places.
Thou hast enlarged my steps under me;
So that my ankles swerved not.[5]

Of the brook shall he drink by the way:
Therefore shall he lift up the head.[6]

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[1] 1 Chron. xiv. 15. [2] Judges v. 21. [3] Ps. lxxxiii. 13, 14.
[4] Ps. lv. 6-8. [5] 2 Sam. xxii. 3, 34, 37. [6] Ps. cx. 7.

The gazelle, Israel, is slain on thy heights,
How fallen are the heroes![1]

When the Almighty scattered kings on her,
It was as when it snoweth on Salmon.[2]

How vividly do these cries from Israel's mountain-war bring before us all that thirsty, broken land of crags and shelves, moors and gullies, with its mire and its rock, its few summer brooks, its winter spates and heavy snows; the rustling of its woods, its gusts of wind, and its bush fires; its startled birds, when the sudden storms from the sea sweep up the gorges, and its glimpses of deer, poised for a moment on the high sky-line of the hills. The battle-fields, too, are always accurately described—the features of the Vale of Elah, of Michmash, of Jezreel, and of Jeshimon can be recognised to-day from the stories of David and Goliath, of Jonathan and the Philistine host, of Saul's defeat and Gideon's victory, and Saul's pursuit of David.[3]

Battle-fields.

The little details, which thus catch a soldier's ear and eye, are of course not so frequent with the prophets as the long lines of the land, and its greater natural phenomena.

He that sitteth on the circle of the earth,
And the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers;
That stretcheth the heavens as a curtain,
And spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in.[4]

Men who looked at life under that lofty imagination did

[1] 2 Sam. i. 19.

[2] Ps. lxviii. 14.

[3] The most careful study of these battle-fields is that given by Principal Miller in *The Least of all Lands*, and accurate plans accompany the vivid descriptions. See also Major Conder's identification of the scene of the story of David and Goliath, and his description of Mount Hachilah in Jeshimon.—*Tent Work*, pp. 277 and 244.

[4] Isaiah xl. 22.

not notice closely the details of their country's scenery. What infected them was the sense of space and distance, the stupendous contrasts of desert and fertility, the hard, straight coast with the sea breaking into foam, the swift sunrise, the thunderstorms sweeping the length of the land, and the earthquakes. For these were symbols of the great prophetic themes: the abiding justice and mercy of God, the steadfastness of His providence, the nearness of His judgments to life, which lies between His judgments as the land between the Desert and the *Great Deep*; His power to bring up life upon His people as spring rushes up on the wilderness; His awful last judgment, like *morning scattered on the mountains*, when the dawn is crushed upon the land between the hills and the heavy clouds, and the lurid light is spilt like the wine-press of the wrath of God. And if those great outlines are touched here and there with flowers, or a mist, or a bird's nest, or a passing thistledown, or a bit of meadow, or a quiet pool, or an olive-tree in the sunshine, it is to illustrate human beauty, which comes upon the earth as fair as her wild-flowers, and as quickly passeth away, which is like a vapour that appeareth for a moment on the hillside and then vanisheth; or it is to symbolise God's provision of peace to His people in corners and nooks of this fiercely-swept life of ours:

The Scenery in the Prophets.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:
He leadeth me beside the still waters.[1]

They looked unto him, and were lightened;[2]

where the effect is of liquid light, when the sun breaks

[1] Psalm xxiii. 2.

[2] Psalm xxxiv. 5, Massoretic text.

through the clouds, rippling across a wood or a troubled piece of water.

But I am like a green olive-tree in the house of God.[1]

I will be as the dew unto Israel:
He shall blossom as the lily, and strike forth his roots like Lebānon:
His branches shall spread,
His beauty shall be as the olive-tree, and his smell as Lebānon.[2]

Bring up man and the animals on the scene, and you see those landscapes described by Old Testament writers exactly as you will see them to-day—the valleys covered with corn, the pastures above clothed with flocks, shepherds and husbandmen calling to each other through the morning air, the narrow high-banked hill-roads brimming with sheep, the long and stately camel trains, the herds of wild cattle,—*bulls of Bashan have compassed me about.* You see the villages by day, with the children coming forth to meet the traveller;[3] the villages by night, without a light, when you stumble on them in the darkness, and all the dogs begin barking,—*at evening they return and make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city.* You see night,

Wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth.
The sun ariseth, they shrink together,
And lay them down in their dens
Man goeth forth unto his work,
And to his labour till the evening.

You see those details which are so characteristic of every Eastern landscape, the chaff and rolling thorns blown before the wind, the dirt cast out on the streets; the broken vessel by the well; the forsaken house; the dusty grave.

Let us pay attention to all these, and we shall surely

[1] Psalm lii. 8. [2] Hosea xiv. 5, 6. [3] 2 Kings vi.; Mark x. 13.

feel ourselves in the atmosphere and scenery in which David fought, and Elisha went to and fro, and Malachi saw the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings.

There are three poems in the Old Testament which give a more or less comprehensive picture of the scenery of Palestine: the Twenty-Ninth Psalm, the Song of Solomon, and the Hundred and Fourth Psalm.

The Twenty-Ninth Psalm describes a thunderstorm travelling the whole length of the land, rattling and stripping it: so that you see its chief features sweeping before you on the storm. Enough to give the translation of verses 3-9, which contain the description. It begins among the thunder-clouds:

Psalm xxix.

The voice of Jehovah is upon the waters,
The God of Glory thundereth;
Jehovah is upon great waters.
The voice of Jehovah with power,
The voice of Jehovah with majesty,
The voice of Jehovah breaketh the cedars;
Yea, Jehovah breaketh the cedars of Lebanon.
He maketh them also to skip like a calf;
Lebanon and Sirion like a wild ox in his youth.
The voice of Jehovah heweth out flames of fire.
The voice of Jehovah maketh the wilderness whirl;
Jehovah maketh the wilderness of Kadesh to whirl.
The voice of Jehovah maketh the hinds to travail,
And strippeth the forests;
In His palace every one sayeth, Glory.[1]

Here all the scenery appears to us, as in flashes of lightning, from the storm-clouds that break on the peaks of Lebanon, down Lebanon's flanks to the lower forests where the deer lie, and so out upon the desert. In the

[1] Psalm xxix. 3-9.

last verse there is a wonderful contrast between the agitation of the earth at one end of the storm, and the glory of the heavenly temple at the other.[1]

In the Song of Songs we have a very different aspect of the country: springtime among the vineyards and villages of North Israel, where the poem was certainly composed. The date does not matter for our purpose:

Song of Songs.

'*For, see, the winter has passed,*
The rain is over and gone;
The flowers appear in the land;
The time of singing is come,
And the turtle dove's murmur is heard in our land.
The fig-tree is reddening her figs,
And blossoming vines give forth their scent.'[2]

'*Come, my beloved, let us forth to the field,*
Let us lodge in the villages,
Let us early to the vineyards,
Let us see if the vine flourish,
If the vine blossom have opened,
The pomegranates bud.
There will I give thee my loves,
The mandrakes are fragrant,
And about our gates are all rare fruits,—
I have stored them for thee, my beloved.'

Lebanon is in sight and Hermon:

'*Come with me from Lebānon,*
My bride, with me from Lebānon,
Look from the top of Amana,
From the top of Shenīr and of Hermon.'

And the bracing air from snow-fields and pine-forests wafts down

The scent of Lebānon.

There are the shepherds' black tents, the flocks of goats

[1] I feel no reason to depart in this verse from the Massoretic text. But see Cheyne *in loco*, who reads *oaks* for *hinds*.

[2] Song ii. 11-13; vii. 12.

that swarm from Mount Gilead, the sheep that come up from the shearing and washing, and the strange pomp which now and then passes by the high road across North Israel from Egypt to Damascus—royal litters, chariots, and regiments with banners, heralded by clouds of dust.

> '*I have likened thee, O my love,*
> *To a horse among the chariots of Pharaoh.*'[1]

> '*What is this coming up from the wilderness*
> *Like pillars of smoke?*
> *Behold! it is Solomon's palanquin;*
> *Threescore mighty men are around it,*
> *Of the mighty of Israel;*
> *All of them grasping the sword,*
> *Experts in war.*
> *Every man with sword on his thigh,*
> *Against the alarms of the night.*'[2]

> '*Who is she that looketh forth like the dawn,*
> *Fair as the moon, pure as the sun,*
> *Glorious as bannered hosts?*'[3]
> '*I went down into the garden of nuts,*
> *To see the fruits of the valley;*
> *To see whether the vine flourished,*
> *The pomegranates budded.*
> *Or ever I knew,*
> *My soul had brought me on the chariots of my willing people.*'[4]

The text of the last verse is evidently corrupt, but the sense is clear. The country girl has gone down into the valley, where she thinks herself alone with the nut-trees and pomegranates, when suddenly a military troop, marching by the valley road, surprise her. We shall see, when we come to Galilee, that the character of that province is to be a garden, crossed by many of the world's

[1] Song i. 9. [2] iii. 6-8. [3] Imposing. [4] vi. 10-12.

high-roads. Nothing could better illustrate this character than the procession and pomp, the chariots and banners, which break through the rural scenery of the Song of Songs.

Psalm civ.

We have no space here for the Hundred and Fourth Psalm, and must refer the reader to the Revised Version of it. He will find a more comprehensive view of the Holy Land than in any other Scripture, for it embraces both atmosphere and scenery,—wind, water and light, summer and winter, mountain, valley and sea, man and the wild beasts.

The Bible a Highland work.

Before we pass from the scenery, it may be well to draw the reader's attention to one feature of its description in the Old Testament. By numerous little tokens, we feel that this is scenery described by Highlanders: by men who, for the most part, looked down upon their prospects and painted their scenes from above. Their usual word for valley is *depth*[1]—something below them; for terror and destruction some of their commonest names mean originally *abyss*.[2] God's unfathomable judgments are *depths*, for the narrow platform of their life fell eastward to an invisible depth; their figure for salvation and freedom is a *wide* or a *large place*.[3] Their stage slopes away from them, every apparition on it is described as *coming up*. And there is that singular sense, which I do not think appears in any other literature, but which pervades the Old Testament, of seeing mountain-tops from above. Israel *treadeth upon his high places*, as if mountain-tops were a common road; and *Jehovah marcheth upon His high places*, as if it were a usual thing to see clouds below, and yet

[1] עמק. [2] פחת בלע etc. [3] מרחב.

on the tops of hills. Joel looks from his high station eastward over the tops of the mountains that sink to the Dead Sea, and speaks of *morn above the mountains* broken and *scattered upon them* by the heavy thunder-clouds. And, finally, we owe to the high station of Israel, those long approaches and very distant prospects both of war and peace: the trails of armies across the plains in fire and smoke, the land spreading very far forth, and, though Israel was no maritime people, the wonderful visions of the coast and the sea.

CHAPTER V

THE LAND AND QUESTIONS OF FAITH



THE LAND AND QUESTIONS OF FAITH

THESE questions have, no doubt, already suggested themselves to the reader, and will do so again and again as he passes through the land—How far does the geography of Palestine bear witness to the truth and authenticity of the different books of the Bible? How far does a knowledge of the land assist our faith as Christians in the Word of God and Jesus Christ His Son? It may be well for us, before we go through the land, to have at least the possibilities of its contribution to these arguments accurately defined, were it for no other reason than that it is natural to expect too much, and that a large portion of the religious public, and of writers for them, habitually exaggerate the evidential value of the geography and archæology of Palestine, and by emphasising what is irrelevant, especially in details, miss altogether the grand, essential contents of the Land's testimony to the divine origin of our religion.

We have seen how freshly the poetry and narrative of the Bible reflect the natural features of Palestine both in outline and in detail. Every visitor to the land has felt this. Napoleon himself may be quoted: 'When camping on the ruins of those ancient towns, they read aloud Scripture every evening in the tent of the General-in-Chief. The analogy and the truth of the descriptions were striking:

they still fit this country after so many centuries and changes.'[1] This is not more than the truth, yet it does not carry us very far. That a story accurately reflects geography does not necessarily mean that it is a real transcript of history—else were the Book of Judith the truest man ever wrote, instead of being what it is, a pretty piece of fiction. Many legends are wonderful photographs of scenery. And, therefore, let us at once admit that, while we may have other reasons for the historical truth of the patriarchal narratives, we cannot prove this on the ground that their itineraries and place-names are correct. Or, again, that the Book of Joshua, in marking tribal boundaries, gives us a detailed list of towns, the most of which we are able to identify, does not prove anything about the date or authorship of these lists, nor the fact of the deliberate partition of the land in Joshua's time. Again, that Israel's conquests under Moses on the east of the Jordan went so far north as described, is not proved by the discovery in these days of the various towns mentioned. In each of these cases, all that is proved is that the narrative was written in the land by some one who knew the land, and this has never been called in question. The date, the accuracy of the narrative, will have to be discussed on other grounds. All that geography can do is to show whether or not the situations were possible at the time to which they are assigned, and even this is a task often beyond her resources.

Geographical accuracy of Scripture

not proof of historical accuracy.

[1] 'En campant sur les ruines de ces anciennes villes, on lisait tous les soirs l'Écriture Sainte à haute voix sous la tente du général en chef. L'analogie et la vérité des descriptions étaient frappantes ; elles conviennent encore à ce pays après tant de siècles et de vicissitudes.'—*Campagnes d'Égypte et de Syrie, dictées par Napoléon lui-même*, vol. ii. (see p. 19 of this vol.).

At the same time, there are in the Old Testament pictures of landscape, and especially descriptions of the geographical relations of Israel, which we cannot help feeling as testimonies of the truth of the narratives in which they occur. If, for instance, you can to-day follow the description of a battle by the contours, features, and place-names of the landscape to which it is assigned, that surely is a strong, though not, of course, a final, proof that such a description is true. In this connection one thinks especially of the battles of the Vale of Elah, Michmash, and Jezreel. And certainly it is striking that in none of the narratives of these is there any geographical impossibility. Again, nothing that the Pentateuch tells us about the early movements of the Philistines and the Hittites disagrees with the other evidence we possess from geography and archæology;[1] while Israel's relations to the Philistines, in the record of the Judges and early Kings, contrasted with her relations to the same people in the prophetic period, is in exact accordance with the data of the historical geography of Syria.[2]

Battle-fields.

Early migrations.

As to questions of authorship, the evidence of geography mainly comes in support of a decision already settled by other proofs. In this matter one thinks especially of the accurate pictures of the surroundings of Jerusalem given in the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah, both of them her citizens, contrasted with the very different geographical reflection on the earlier prophecies of Ezekiel, or the second half of the Book of Isaiah. Geography, too, assists us in the analysis of the composite books of the Old Testament into their

Geography and authenticity.

[1] See chapter on the Philistines, p. 172. [2] *Ibid.* p. 178.

various documents, for in the Pentateuch, for instance, each document has often its own name for the same locality, and as has just been said, the geographical reflection on the first half of the Book of Isaiah is very different from that on the second half.[1] But in the Old Testament geography has little contribution to make to any question of authenticity, for, with the exceptions stated above, the whole of the Old Testament is admitted to have been written by natives of Palestine, who were familiar with their land.

It is different, however, with the New Testament, where authorship outside Palestine is sometimes a serious possibility. Here questions of authenticity are closely bound up with those of geographical accuracy. Take the case of the Gospel of St. John. It has been held that the writer could not have been a native of Palestine, because of certain errors which are alleged to occur in his description of places. I have shown, in a chapter on the Question of Sychar, that this opinion finds no support in the passage most loudly quoted in its defence.[2] And, again, the silence of the synoptic Gospels concerning cities on the Lake of Galilee, like Tiberias and Taricheae, which became known all over the Roman world in the next generation, and their mention of places not so known, has a certain weight in the argument for the early date of the Gospels, and for the authorship of these by contemporaries of Christ's ministry.[3]

But if on all such questions of date, authorship, and accuracy of historical detail, we must be content to admit

[1] Duhm thinks he can make out that part of Isaiah, xl.-lxvi., was composed in Lebanon.

[2] Ch. xviii.

[3] See chapter on the Lake of Galilee, ch. xxi.

that geography has not much more to contribute than a proof of the possibility of certain solutions, it is very different when we rise to the higher matters of the religion of Israel, to the story of its origin and development, to the appearance of monotheism, and to the question of the supernatural. On these the testimony of the historical geography of the Holy Land is high and clear.

Higher questions.

For instance, to whatever date we assign the Book of Deuteronomy, no one who knows the physical constitution of Palestine, and her relation to the great desert, can fail to feel the essential truthfulness of the conception, which rules in that book, of Israel's entrance into the land as at once a rise in civilisation from the nomadic to the agricultural stage of life, and a fall in religion from a faith which the desert kept simple to the rank and sensuous polytheism that was provoked by the natural variety of the Paradise west of Jordan.[1] Or take another most critical stage of Israel's education: no one can appreciate the prophets' magnificent mastery of the historical forces of their time, or the wisdom of their advice to their people, who has not studied the relations of Syria to Egypt and Mesopotamia or the lines across her of the campaigns of these powers.

Deuteronomy and the Prophets.

But these are only details in larger phenomena. In the economy of human progress every race has had its office to fulfil, and the Bible has claimed for Israel the specialism of religion. It represents Israel as brought by God to the Holy Land—as He also carried other peoples to their lands—for the threefold purpose of

The training of Israel.

[1] See chapter iii., especially pp. 89, 90.

being preserved through all the changes of ancient history, of being educated in true religion, and sent forth to the world as apostles and examples. But how could such a people be better framed than by selection out of that race of mankind which have been most distinguished for their religious temperament, and by settlement on a land both near to, and aloof from, the main streams of human life, where they could be at once spectators of history and yet not its victims, where they could at once enjoy personal communion with God and yet have some idea also of His providence of the whole world ; where they could at once gather up the experience of the ancient world, and break with it into the modern? There is no land which is at once so much a sanctuary and an observatory as Palestine: no land which, till its office was fulfilled, was so swept by the great forces of history, and was yet so capable of preserving one tribe in national continuity and growth : one tribe learning and suffering and rising superior to the successive problems these forces presented to her, till upon the opportunity afforded by the last of them she launched with her results upon the world. It is the privilege of the student of the historical geography of Palestine to follow all this process of development in detail. If a man can believe that there is no directing hand behind our universe and the history of our race, he will, of course, say that all this is the result of chance. But, for most of us, only another conclusion is possible. It may best be expressed in the words of one who was no theologian but a geographer—perhaps the most scientific observer Palestine has ever had. Karl Ritter says of Palestine : 'Nature and the course of history shows that

here, from the beginning onwards, there cannot be talk of any chance.'[1]

But while the geography of the Holy Land has this positive evidence to offer, it has also negative evidence to the same end. The physical and political conditions of Israel's history do not explain all the results. Over and over again we shall see the geography of the land forming barriers to Israel's growth, by surmounting which the moral force that is in her becomes conspicuous. We shall often be tempted to imagine that Israel's geography, physical and political, is the cause of her religion ; but as often we shall discover that it is only the stage on which a spirit—that, to use the words of the prophets, is neither in her mountains nor in her men—rises superior alike to the aids and to the obstacles which these contribute. This is especially conspicuous in the case of Israel's monotheism. Monotheism was born not, as M. Renan says, in Arabia, but in Syria. And the more we know of Syria and of the other tribes that inhabited her, the more we shall be convinced that neither she nor they had anything to do with the origin of Israel's faith. For myself, I can only say that all I have seen of the land, and read of its ancient history, drives me back to the belief that the monotheism which appeared upon it was ultimately due to the revelation of a character and a power which carried with them the evidence of their uniqueness and divine sovereignty.

Geography and moral forces.

Monotheism.

But the truth and love of God have come to us in their

[1] 'Die Natur und der Hergang der Geschichte zeigt uns dass hier von Anfang an von keiner Zufälligkeit die Rede sein kann.'—K. Ritter, *Ein Blick auf Palästina u. seine christliche Bevölkerung.*

highest power not as a book, even though that be the Bible, nor as a doctrine, even though that be the monotheism of the Bible, with all its intellectual and moral consequences, but as a Man, a native and a citizen of this land: whose education was its history, whose temptation was some of its strongest political forces, who overcame by loyalty to its distinctive gospel,[1] who gathered up the significance of its history into Himself, and whose ministry never left its narrow limits. He drew His parables from the fields its sunshine lights, and from all the bustle of its daily life; He prayed and agonised for us through its quiet night scenes; He vindicated His mission to mankind in conflict with its authorities, and He died for the world on one of its common places of execution. For our faith in the Incarnation, therefore, a study of the historical geography of Palestine is a necessary discipline. Besides helping us to realise the long preparation of history, Jewish and Gentile, for the coming of the Son of God, a vision of the soil and climate in which He grew up and laboured is the only means of enforcing the reality of His manhood. It delivers us, on the one hand, from those abstract views of His humanity which have so often been the error and curse of Christianity; and, on the other hand, from what is to-day a more present danger—the interpretation of Christ (prevalent with many of our preachers to the times) as if He were a son of our own generation.

The Incarnation.

The course of Divine Providence in Syria has not been one of mere development and cultivation, of building and planting. It has been full also of rebuke and frustration, of rooting up and tearing down. Judgment has

[1] See pp. 35-37.

all along mingled with mercy. Christ Himself did not look forward to the course of the history of the kingdom which he founded as an unchecked advance to universal dominion. He took anything but an optimistic view of the future of His Church. He pictured Himself not only as her King and Leader to successive victories, but as her Judge: revisiting her suddenly, and finding her asleep; separating within her the wise from the foolish, the true from the false, the pure from the corrupt, and punishing her with sore and awful calamities. Ought we to look for these visitations only at the end of the world? Have we not seen them already fulfilled in the centuries? Has not the new Israel been punished for her sin, as Israel of old was, by the historical powers of war, defeat, and captivity?

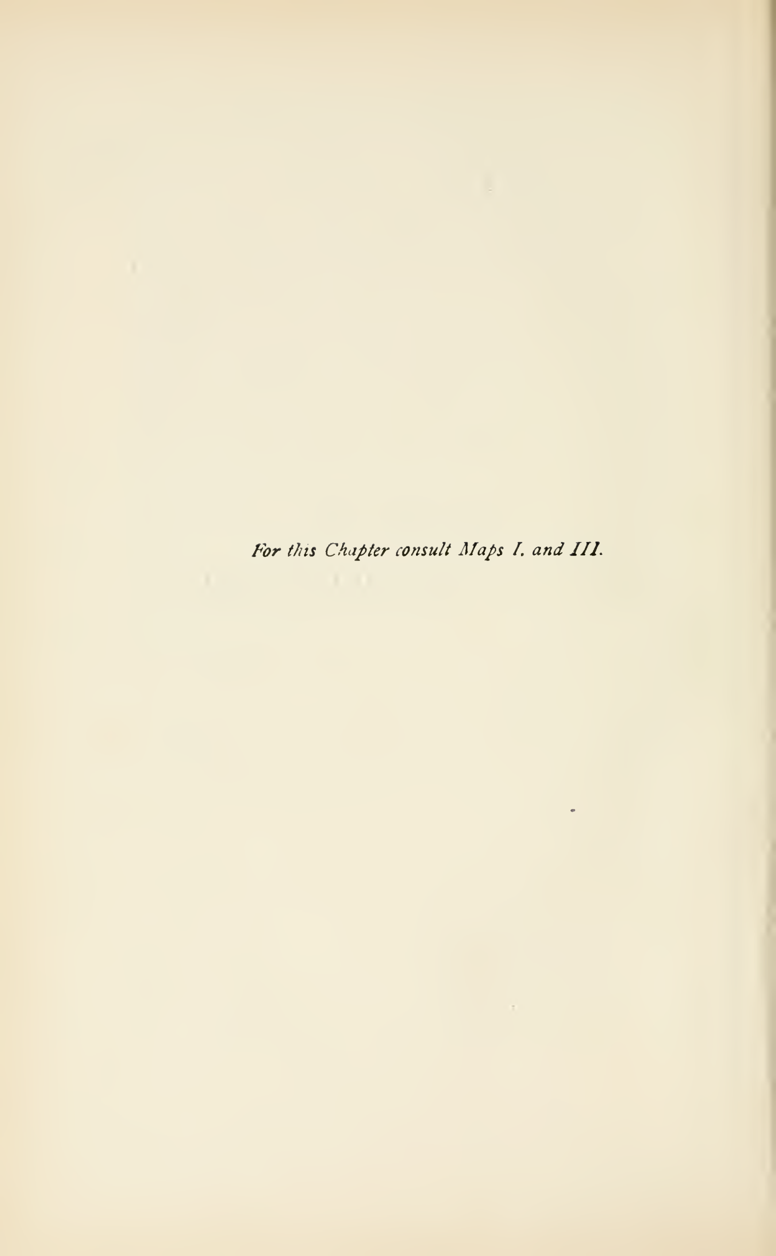
Christianity and Islam.

It is in the light of these principles of Christ's teaching that we are to estimate the mysterious victory of Mohammedanism over Christianity on the very theatre of our Lord's revelation. The Christianity of Syria fell before Islam, because it was corrupt, and deserved to fall. And again, in attempting by purely human means to regain her birthplace, the Church was beaten back by Islam, because she was divided, selfish, and worldly. In neither of these cases was it a true Christianity that was overthrown, though the true Christianity bears to this day the reproach and the burden of the results. The irony of the Divine Judgment is clearly seen in this, that it was on the very land where a spiritual monotheism first appeared that the Church was first punished for her idolatry and materialism; that it was in sight of scenes where Christ taught and healed and went about doing good with

His band of poor, devoted disciples, that the envious, treacherous, truculent hosts of the Cross were put to sword and fire. They who in His name sought a kingdom of this world by worldly means, could not hope to succeed on the very fields where He had put such a temptation from Him. The victory of Islam over Christendom is no more an obstacle to faith than the victory of Babylonia over Israel upon the same stage. *My threshing-floor*, said God of these mountains, and so they proved a second time. The same ethical principles by which the prophets explain the overthrow of Israel account for the defeat of Christianity. If the latter teach us, as the former taught them, the folly of making a political kingdom the ambition of our faith, the fatality of seeking to build the Church of God by intrigue and the sword, if it drive us inward to the spiritual essence of religion and outward to the Master's own work of teaching and healing, the Mohammedan victory will not have been in vain any more than the Babylonian. Let us believe that what Christ promised to judge by the visitations of history is not the World, but His Church, and let us put our own house in order. Then the reproach that rests on Palestine will be rolled away.

CHAPTER VI

THE VIEW FROM MOUNT EBAL



For this Chapter consult Maps I. and III.

THE VIEW FROM MOUNT EBAL

IT may assist the reader to grasp the various features of the Holy Land, which we have been surveying in the last four chapters, if he be helped to see it with his own eyes as it lies to-day. The smallness of Palestine enables us to make this view nearly complete from two points.

Palestine from the sea.

First let us stand off the land altogether, and take its appearance from the sea. As you sail north from Jaffa, what you see is a straight line of coast in alternate stretches of cliff and sand, beyond this a plain varying from eight to thirty miles in width, and then the Central Range itself, a persistent mountain-wall of nearly uniform level, rising clear and blue from the slopes which buttress it to the west. How the heart throbs as the eye sweeps that long and steadfast sky-line! For just behind, upon a line nearly coincident with the water-parting between Jordan and the sea, lie Shechem, Shiloh, Bethel, Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Hebron. Of only one of these does any sign appear. Towards the north end of the range two bold round hills break the sky-line, with evidence of a deep valley between them. The hills are Ebal and Gerizim, and in the valley—the only real pass across the range—lies Nablus, anciently Shechem.

That the eye is thus drawn from the first upon the

position of Shechem—and we shall see that what is thus true of the approach from the west is also true of that from the east—while all the other chief sites of Israel's life lie hidden away, and are scarcely to be seen till you come upon them, is a remarkable fact, which we may emphasise in passing. It is a witness to the natural, and an explanation of the historical, precedence which was enjoyed by this northern capital over her more famous sister, Jerusalem.

But now let us come on to the land itself, and take our second point of view at this, its obvious centre. Of the two hills beside Shechem, Gerizim is the more famous historically, but Ebal is higher, and has the further prospect. The view from Ebal virtually covers the whole land, with the exception of the Negeb. All the four long zones, two of the four frontiers, specimens of all the physical features, and most of the famous scenes of the history, are in sight. No geography of Palestine can afford to dispense with the view from the top of Ebal. In detail it is this:

The view from Mount Ebal.

Looking south, you have at your feet the pass through the range, with Nablus; then over it the mass of Gerizim, with a ruin or two; and then twenty-four miles of hill-tops, at the back of which you dimly discern a tower. That is Neby Samwîl, the ancient Mizpeh. Jerusalem is only five miles beyond, and to the west the tower overlooks the Shephelah. Turning westwards, you see—nay, you almost feel—the range letting itself down, by irregular terraces, on to the plain; the plain itself flattened by the height from which you look, but really undulating to mounds of one and two hundred feet; beyond the plain the gleaming sandhills of the coast and the infinite blue

sea. Joppa lies south-west thirty-three miles; Cæsarea north-west twenty-nine. Turning northwards, we have the long ridge of Carmel running down from its summit, perhaps thirty-five miles distant, to the low hills that separate it from our range; over the rest of this the hollow that represents Esdraelon; over that the hills of Galilee in a haze, and above the haze the glistening shoulders of Hermon, at seventy-five miles of distance. Sweeping south from Hermon, the eastern horizon is the edge of Hauran above the Lake of Galilee, continued by the edge of Mount Gilead exactly east of us, and by the edge of Moab, away to the south-east. This line of the Eastern Range is maintained at a pretty equal level, nearly that on which we stand,[1] and seems unbroken, save by the incoming valleys of the Yarmuk and the Jabbok. It is only twenty-five miles away, and on the near side of it lies the Jordan Valley—a great wide gulf, of which the bottom is out of sight. On this side Jordan the foreground is the hilly bulwark of Mount Ephraim, penetrated by a valley coming up from Jordan into the plain of the Mukhneh to meet the pass that splits the range at our feet.

The view is barer than a European eye desires, but softened by the haze the great heat sheds over all. White clouds hang stagnant in the sky, and their shadows crouch below them among the hills, as dogs that wait for their masters to move. But I have also seen the mists, as low as the land, sweep up from the Mediterranean, and so deluge the range that, in a few hours, the valleys which lie quiet through the summer are loud with the rush of water and the rattle of stones; and though the long trails of cloud wrap the summits, and cling about the hillsides,

[1] Ebal is 3077 feet.

the land looks barer and more raw than in the sunshine. The hills are brown, with here and there lighter shades, here and there darker. Look through the glass, and you see that the lighter are wheat-fields ripening, the darker are olive groves, sometimes two miles in extent, not thickly planted like woods in our land, but with the trees wide of each other, and the ground broken up beneath. Had we looked west even so recently as the Crusades, we should have seen Sharon one oak forest from coast to mountain. Carmel is green with its carobs and oak saplings. But near us the only great trees are the walnuts and sycomores of Nablus, immediately below. In valley-beds, or on the brow of a steep slope, but mostly occupying the tops of island-knolls, are the villages. There are no farmsteads, villas, or lonely castles, for the land is still what it has been from Gideon's and Deborah's time—a disordered land, where homes cannot safely lie apart. In all the prospect the one town, the most verdant valley, lie at our feet, and the valley flows out, on the east, to a sea of yellow corn that fills the plain below Gerizim. Anciently more villages would have been visible, and more corn, with vineyards where now ruined terrace walls add to the stoniness of the hills. In Herod's day the battlements of Cæsarea and its great white temple above the harbour would have flashed to us in the forenoon sun; behind Ebal the city of Samaria would have been still splendid and populous; a castle would have crowned Gerizim; there would have been more coming and going on the roads, and the sound of trumpets would have risen oftener than it does to-day from the little garrison below. In Christian times we should have seen the flat architecture of the villages, which you can scarcely distinguish from the

shelves of the mountains, break into churches, with high gables, cupolas, and spires. For the century of the feudal kingdom at Jerusalem, castles were built here and there, and under their shelter cloisters and farmsteads dared to be where they never could be before or since. That must have been one of the greatest changes the look of the land has undergone.

But during all these ages the great long lines of the land would be spread out exactly in the same way as now—the straight coast, and its broad plain; the range that rolls from our feet north and south, with its eastern buttresses falling to the unseen bottom of the Jordan Valley, and across this the long level edge of the table-land of the East.

It is on Ebal, too, that we feel the size of the Holy Land—Hermon and the heights of Judah both within sight, while Jordan is not twenty, nor the coast thirty miles away—and that the old wonder comes strongly upon us of the influence of so small a province on the history of the whole world. But the explanation is also within sight. Down below us, at the mouth of the glen, lies a little heap of brown stones.[1] The road comes up to it by which the patriarchs first entered the land, and the shadow of a telegraph post falls upon it. It is Jacob's well: *Neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem shall ye worship the Father; but the time cometh, and now is, when true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth.*

[1] Or did when the writer was there in 1891; but the Greek Church have begun to build over it.



BOOK II

WESTERN PALESTINE

CHAPTER VII

THE COAST

For this Chapter consult Maps I., II., IV., V., VI

THE COAST

'Ante importuosas Asceloni ripas.'

EVERY one remembers, from the map, the shape of the east end of the Levant. An almost straight line runs from north to south, with a slight inclination westward. There is no large island off it, and upon it no deep estuary or fully sheltered gulf. North of the headland of Carmel nature has so far assisted man by prompting here a cape, and dropping there an islet, that not a few harbours have been formed which have been, and may again become, historical. When we remember that the ships of antiquity were small, propelled by oars and easily beached, we understand how these few advantages were sufficient to bring forth the greatest maritime nation of the ancient world—especially with the help of the mountains behind, which, pressing closely on the coast, compelled the population to push seaward for the means of livelihood.

Phœnicia.

South of Carmel the Syrian coast has been much more strictly drawn. The mountains no longer come so near to it as to cut up the water with their roots. But sandhills and cliffs, from thirty to a hundred feet high, run straight on to the flat Egyptian delta, without either promontory or recess. A forward rock at 'Athlit, two curves of the beach at Tanturah, twice low

South of Carmel.

reefs—at Abu Zaburah and Jaffa—the faint promise of a dock in the inland basin of Askalon, with the barred mouths of five or six small streams [1]—such are all the possibilities of harbourage on this coast. The rest is merely a shelf for the casting of wreckage and the roosting of sea-birds. The currents are parallel to the coast, and come north laden with sand and Nile-mud, that helps to choke the few faint estuaries and creeks.[2] It is almost always a lee-shore; the prevailing winds are from the south-west.

No natural harbours.

Of this natural inhospitality two consequences followed in the history of the land. In the first place, no invader ever disembarked an army south of Carmel, till the country behind the coast was already in his power. Even invaders from Europe—the Philistines themselves (if indeed they came from Crete),[3] Alexander, Pompey, the first Crusaders, and Napoleon—found their way into Palestine by land, either from Egypt or from Asia Minor. Other Crusaders disembarked farther north, at Acre or Tyre, and in the Third Crusade, Richard, though assisted by a fleet, won all the coast fortresses south of Carmel from the land.[4] But again, this part of the coast has never produced a maritime people. It is true that the name Phœnicia once extended as far south as Egypt;[5]

[1] The mouth of the Rubin is seventy yards across, and six feet deep, yet by the bar, *amoncellement du sable*, it can be forded: Guérin, *Judée*, ii. 53.

[2] Admiralty Charts, 2633, 2634. Cf. Otto Ankel, *Grundzüge der Landesnatur des Westjordanlandes*, 32, 33. Thus the Nile has not only created Egypt, but helped to form the Syrian coast.

[3] See pp. 170 f.

[4] Richard had come to Acre by Cyprus. Philip Augustus and Konrad landed at Acca. Frederick II., in 1228, came by Cyprus to Batrûn, south of Tripoli. In the Middle Ages the galleys leaving Venice or Genoa touched at Corfu, Crete, Rhodes, and Cyprus, from which they made for Jaffa as the nearest port to Jerusalem. See Felix Fabri (in *P.P.T.* Series), vol. i.

[5] So Strabo. Josephus xv. *Antt.* ix. 6; Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* v. 14, speaks of Joppa of the Phœnicians.

Phœnician masonry has been uncovered at Tanturah, the name of 'Arsûf is probably derived from the Phœnician god Reseph,[1] and we have records of Sidonian supremacy at various times over Dora and Joppa, as of Tyrian over Joppa and Askalon.[2] But the Phœnicians cannot be said to have been at home south of Carmel. Phœnicia proper lay to the north of that headland; from Carmel to Egypt the tribes were agricultural, or interested in the land trade alone. It was not till a seafaring people like the Greeks had planted their colonies in Sharon and Philistia that great harbours were seriously attempted. Of this a striking illustration is given by the generic name of the landing-places from Gaza to Cæsarea. This is not Semitic but Greek: El-mîneh, by a very usual transposition of the vowel and consonant of the first syllable, is the Greek *Limen*;[3] Lemînah is still in the Talmud the name for the port of Cæsarea.[4] The other name for harbour on this coast, Maiumas, has not yet been explained.[5]

[1] See *Survey Memoirs*, ii. p. 137 ff. Clermont-Ganneau, *Recueil d'Archéologie Oriental.* It is M. Ganneau who has proposed the interesting identification of Horus, Reseph, Perseus, and St. George. The myths of Perseus and St. George were both born on this coast, see p. 162. A stone hawk, which he maintains is the symbol of Horus, was found at 'Arsûf. He adds that Reseph was probably equivalent to Apollo, and in Egypt Apollo and Horus were equal. But the classical name of 'Arsûf, Apollonia, cannot be used to assist this identification. It was probably conferred by Apollonius, son of Thraseas, who governed Cœle-Syria for Seleucus Antipater, 1 Macc. x. 69 ff. It was rebuilt by Gabinius in 57 B.C., in the Crusades it was besieged by Godfrey, taken by Baldwin, again by Richard; Louis restored the fortifications, and it was finally destroyed by Bibars in 1265. Cf. again Clermont-Ganneau in *P.E.F.Q.*, 1896.

[2] Inscription of Eshmunazar, ll. 18, 19, in the *C.I.S.*, i. 19, 20, which records the grant of Dora and Joppa to Sidon. Scylax (*Geographi Græci Minores*, ed. Müller, i. 79) assigns Dora to the Sidonians and Askalon to the Tyrians during the Persian period. For Phœnician trade with Joppa, cf. Jonah i. 3, 2 Chron. iv. 16. But the name of Joppa is not inserted in the parallel passage in 1 Kings v.

[3] Like 'Arsûf from Reseph.

[4] למינה, Talmud Jerus. Gittin, i. 1. Cf. Conder, *Tent Work*, p. 283.

[5] Conder makes it equivalent to watering-place.

But the failure even of these attempts to establish permanent ports for deep-sea vessels is a yet stronger proof of the inhospitable character of the coast. Let us take them in series from the north. 'Athlît has twice been held against all the rest of Palestine. In 130 A.D. it was the last stronghold of Jewish independence: in the thirteenth century it was the last fortress of the Cross.[1] Yet seaward 'Athlît is unsheltered. The blunt foreland suggests the only kind of harbour possible on the Syrian shore—a double port facing north and south, whose opposite basins might compensate for each other's exposure; yet no such harbour seems to have been attempted. The Crusading ruins at 'Athlît are numerous and solid; there is a castle, a church, and remains of a mighty sea-wall. Yet the men who built these built out into the sea nothing but a jetty that is now covered by the waves. Farther south at Tanturah, the ancient Dor, Merla, or La Merle of the Crusaders,[2] there are also great buildings and the suggestion of a double harbour. If this was ever achieved, it has disappeared, and only a few coasting vessels now put in to the unprotected rock. Cæsarea had a great port; yet nothing but part of its mole remains. Within the reefs at Minet 'Abu Zaburah the inhabitants of Nablus used to keep a few boats, but little masonry is visible.[3] At 'Arsûf,[4] there is a tiny harbour, yawning thirty feet between a jetty and a reef; it is used by fishermen. Every one knows the open roadstead at Jaffa, with the reefs that are more dangerous in foul weather than they are

Wrecked harbours.

[1] It was known then as *Castellum Peregrinorum*.

[2] On Dor see further, ch. xix. On La Merle, cf. Geoffrey de Vinsauf, *Itinerarium Ricardi*, iv. 14.

[3] The famous water-melons of Mukhâlid are exported from here.

[4] See p. 129.

useful in fair.[1] In olden days Jamnia had a Limen at the mouth of the Nahr Rubin, but the Minet Rubin, as it is now called, is a little way off this, and by a few rocks with some masonry provides only a landing-place for small boats.[2] The Limen of Ashdod is now the Minet-el-Kulah, with a landing-place between reefs 'at which ships occasionally touch.'[3] At Askalon there are visible at low water two shallows of crescent shape, which are perhaps remains of ancient moles, and at the bottom of the rocky basin, in which the mediæval city was confined, explorers think they can trace the lines of a little dock; but the sand, which drifts so fast up the coast, has choked the dock, and in the sea there is only a jetty left.[4] The Limen of Gaza was once a considerable town, if we may judge from the ruins that still break from the sand, but the beach is now straight and low, and the roadstead as unsheltered as Jaffa.

Thus, while the cruelty of many another wild coast is known by the wrecks of ships, the Syrian shore south of Carmel is strewn with the fiercer wreckage of harbours.

I have twice sailed along this coast on a summer afternoon with the western sun thoroughly illuminating it, and I remember no break in the long line of foam where land and sea met, no single spot where the land gave way and welcomed the sea to itself. On both occasions the air was quiet, yet all along the line there was disturbance. It seemed as if the land were everywhere saying to the sea: I do not wish you, I do not need you. And this echoes through most of the Old Testament. Here the sea spreads before us for spectacle, for symbol, for music,

[1] Pliny's description (*H.N.*, v. 14) suits the Jaffa of to-day: 'Insidet collem præjacente saxo.'

[2] Guérin, ii. 54.

[3] *P.E.F. Mem.* i., all signs of a harbour are covered with drifting sands.

[4] *Z.D.P.V.*, ii. 164, with a plan. Guérin, *Judée*, ii. 155.

for promise, but never for use—save in one case, when a prophet sought it as an escape from his God.[1] In the Psalms the straight coast serves to illustrate the irremovable limits which the Almighty has set between sea and land. In the Prophets its roar and foam symbolise the futile rage of the heathen beating on Jehovah's steadfast purpose for His own people: *Ah! the booming of the peoples, the multitudes—like the booming of the seas they boom; and the rushing of the nations, like the rushing of mighty waters they rush; nations —like the rushing of many waters they rush. But He checketh it, and it fleeth far away, and is chased like chaff on the mountains before the wind, and like swirling dust before a whirlwind.*[2]

The coast in Scripture.

As in the Psalms and the Prophets, so also in the History the sea was a barrier and not a highway. From the first it was said: *Ye shall have the Great Sea for a border.*[3] Throughout the language the sea is a horizon: the Hebrew name for the West is *the Sea.* There were three tribes, of whom we have evidence that they reached the maritime frontier appointed for them: Dan, who in Deborah's time was *remaining in ships,*[4] but he speedily left them and his bit of coast at Joppa for the far inland sources of Jordan; and Asher and Zebulon, whose territory was not south but north of Carmel. Even in their case no ports are mentioned, the word translated *haven,* in the blessing of Zebulon and in the blame of Asher,[5] being but *beach,* land *washed* by the sea, and the word translated *creeks* meaning

[1] Though in another they, that *go down to the sea in ships and do business in great waters,* are Hebrews, worshippers of Jehovah, Ps. cvii. 23, 24.

[2] Isa. xvii. 12, 13.

[3] Num. xxxiv. 6.

[4] Judges v. 17. See p. 174.

[5] Gen. xlix. 13; Judges v. 17.

no more than just *cracks* or *breaks*. Again, when the builders of the second temple hire Phœnicians to bring timber from Lebanon to Joppa, it is not written 'to the harbour or creek of Joppa,' but to the *sea of Joppa*.[1] So that the only mention of a real harbour in the Old Testament is in the general picture of the storm in Psalm cvii., where the word used means *refuge*. Of the name or idea of a *port*, gateway in or out, there is no trace; and, as we have just seen, in the designation for the port of Cæsarea in the Talmud, Lemînah, and in the name still given to some landing-places on the Philistine coast, El-Mîneh, it is no Semitic root, but the Greek *Limen* which appears. In this inability of their coast-line to furnish the language of Israel with even the suggestion of a port, we have the crowning proof of the peculiar security and seclusion of their land as far as the sea is concerned.

Palestine and Greece.

We can now appreciate how much truth there is in the contrast commonly made between Palestine and Greece. In respect of security the two lands do not much differ; the physical geography of Greece is even more admirably adapted than that of Palestine for purposes of defence. But in respect of seclusion from the sea, and the world which could be reached by the sea, they differed entirely. Upon almost every league of his broken and embayed coast-line, the ancient Greek had an invitation to voyage. The sea came far inland to woo him: by island after island she tempted him across to other continents. She was the ready means to him of commerce, of colonising, and of all that change and adventure with other men, which breed openness, originality

[1] Ezra iii. 7.

and subtlety of mind. But the coast-line of the Jew was very different, and from his high inland station he saw it only far off—a stiff, stormy line, down the whole length of which as there was nothing to tempt men in, so there was nothing to tempt them out.[1]

The effect of a nation's physical environment upon their temper and ideals is always interesting, but can never be more than vaguely described. Whereas of even greater interest, and capable too of exact definition, because abrupt, imperious and supreme, is the manner in which a nation's genius, by sheer moral force and Divine inspiration, dares to look beyond its natural limits, feels at last too great for the conditions in which it was developed, and appropriates regions and peoples, towards which nature has provided it with no avenue. Such a process is nowhere more evident than in the history of Israel; we find the history not only as in other lands, moulded by the geography, but also breaking the moulds, and seeking imperiously new spheres. The first instance of this meets us now. In the development of the religious consciousness of this once desert tribe, there came a time when her eyes were lifted beyond that iron coast, and *her face*, in the words of her great prophet, *became radiant and her heart large with the sparkle of the sea: for there is turned upon thee the sea's flood-tide, and the wealth of the nations is coming unto thee. Who are these like a cloud that fly, and like doves to their windows? Surely towards me the isles are stretching, and ships of Tarshish in the van, to bring thy sons from afar, their silver and their gold with them, to*

[1] Hull (*P.E.F. Memoir on Geology, etc., of Arabia Petræa, Palestine, etc.*) proves that, at no very remote date, the sea washed the foot of the hills. Had this lasted into historical times the whole history of Judæa and Samaria would have been utterly different.

the name of Jehovah of Hosts and to the Holy of Israel, for He hath glorified thee. Isles here are any lands washed by the sea, but what the prophets had chiefly in view were those islands and coasts of the Mediterranean which were within physical sight of the Greek, but to the Hebrew could be the object only of spiritual ambition. Six of them at least are named in the Old Testament.

The Isles.

The nearest is Cyprus, whose people are called Kittim, from the ancient town of Ktî or Kition.[1] Cyprus is not, of course, in sight of any part of the territories of Israel, but its hills can be seen at most times from those hills of northern Syria that are immediately opposite to them, and even from southern Lebanon above Beyrout, during a few weeks about midsummer, when the sun sets behind Mount Tröodos, the peak of that mountain comes out black against the afterglow.[2] It was these glimpses of land in the setting sun, which first drew the Phœnicians westward, and from the Phœnicians the Israelites had their knowledge. Beyond Cyprus is Rhodes, and that was called Rodan among the Hebrews and its people Rodanîm.[3] Crete was known to them under the name Kaphtor.[4] These, the only three islands of the Mediterranean mentioned in the Old Testament, were evidently the line of Phœnician progress westward: they are also the three that occur in nearly every mediæval voyage from Syria to Europe.[5] Beyond them loomed to the Hebrews, farther and

[1] *C.I.S.*, i. 137: cf. Gen. x. 4; Numbers xxiv. 24; Isaiah xxiii. 1, 12.

[2] So Dr. Carslaw of Shweir and I saw it in July 1891 from a hill in front of Shweir, six hours from Beyrout, and 5000 feet above the Mediterranean.

[3] In Ezek. xxvii. 20, for דדן Dedan read רדן Rodan, and in Gen. x. 4, for דדנים Dodanim read רדנים Rodanim, where the LXX. have Ῥόδιοι.

[4] This is more probable than that Kaphtor should be Kaft-ur, an Egyptian name for the Delta. See notes on p. 170.

[5] Cf. p. 128, n. 4.

more uncertain coasts. The name Javan came from the Ionians or Iafones, on the Asiatic shores of the Ægean,[1] but is used of all Greeks down to Alexander the Great.[2] Tubal and Meshech, often mentioned with Javan,[3] were tribes in the interior of Asia Minor. Beyond Javan were the coasts of Elisha,[4] that was perhaps Sicily, and Tarshish, the great Phœnician colony in Spain. To all of these ships traded from Tyre and Sidon and Accho and Joppa. Their outward cargoes were Syrian wheat, oil, and balm, with Oriental wares, and they brought back cloth, purple and scarlet, silver, iron, tin, lead, and brass.[5] Sometimes they carried west Hebrew slaves[6] and outlaws,[7] forerunners of the great Dispersion.

Joppa and the Maccabees.

The isles shall wait for His law; let them give glory to Jehovah, and publish His praise in the isles: unto Me the isles shall hope. When, at last, the Jews got their first and only harbour,[8] it was such a prophecy as this which woke up within them. Of Simon Maccabeus the historian says: 'With all his glory he took Joppa for an haven, and made an entrance to the isles of the sea.'[9] The exultation of this statement—the glad

[1] Isa. lxvi. 19; Ezek. xxvii. 13, 19. In the last verse, for *Dan also* read *Vedan*, which is unknown.

[2] Daniel viii. 21; xi. 2.

[3] Gen. x. 2; Ezek. xxvii. 13. Tubal was the Tebarenians; Meshech the Moschoi of Herodotus. Schrader, *K.A.T.*, 82-84.

[4] Gen. x. 4, Elisha, son of Javan; 1 Chron. i. 7; Ezek. xxvii. 7.

[5] Ezek. xxvii. 6, 12, 13, 17.

[6] Amos ii. 9.

[7] Jonah i. 3.

[8] Eziongeber was probably only held for them, and we are speaking now of the western coast.

[9] 1 Macc. xiv. 5: *Καὶ μετὰ πάσης τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ ἔλαβε τὴν Ἰόππην εἰς λιμένα καὶ ἐποίησεν εἴσοδον ταῖς νήσοις τῆς θαλάσσης.* This was about 144 B.C. Jonathan Maccabeus had captured Joppa in 148 (1 Macc. x. 76), and in 145 he had made Simon lord of the coast from the Ladder of Tyre to the Border of Egypt. But this lordship was only nominal, till the next year, when the Greek natives of Joppa being about to revolt, Simon occupied it with a force, and then, a few years later (about 141), fortified it.

'At last!' that is audible in it—was very natural; and we sympathise with it the more when we learn that this was not a mere military operation of Simon's, but, according to his light, a thoroughly religious measure. In those great days, when Jews took a town within the promised boundaries, they purged it of the heathen and their idols, and settled in it 'such men as would keep the Law.'[1] *The Law*, then, was at last established on the sea, with an open gate to the isles, and the people of Jehovah had more reason to be rapturous than at any time since the prophecies of their western progress were first uttered. Their hopes, however, were defeated by the rigour of the measures they took to fulfil them. In every town the Hellenised population[2] rose against this fanatic priest from the rude highlands, with no right to the sea, and intrigued for the return of Antiochi or Ptolemies, who allowed them to worship their own gods. It was the old opposition between Philistia and Israel, on the old ground. Twice the Syrians retook Joppa, twice Hyrcanus (Simon's successor) won it back. Then, after twenty years of Jewish possession, Pompey came in 63 B.C., and decreed that, with the other coast towns, it should be free.[3] But in 47 Cæsar excepted Joppa, 'which the Jews had originally,' and decreed 'it shall belong to them, as it formerly did;'[4] and later Augustus added it, with other cities, to Herod the Great's

[1] So Simon did at Gazara, 1 Macc. xiii. 47, and, we can understand, in Joppa also, though in a sea-town full of foreigners the task would be more difficult, and not so perfectly accomplished.

[2] In all the coast towns at this time, though the bulk of the common people were from the old stocks of the country, and spoke Aramaic, the upper classes were Greek, and Greek was the official language; and the native deities were amalgamated with their Greek counterparts.

[3] Josephus xiv. *Antt.* iv. 4; i. *Wars*, vii. 7: 'He restored to their own citizens.'

[4] Josephus xiv. *Antt.* x. 6.

kingdom.[1] Joppa was therefore Jewish as no other town on the coast or Maritime Plain became, and so it continued till the campaign of Vespasian in 68 A.D. And it was violently Jewish. Though Joppa was tributary to Herod he never resided there, or tried to rebuild it, or to plant heathen features upon it. Alone of the chief cities of the region, it had no Greek or Latin name attached to it. In close commerce with Jerusalem, Joppa was infected with the fanatic patriotism of the latter; as there were rebels and assassins there, so there were rebels and pirates here. The spirit of disaffection towards Rome passed through the same crises in the coast town as in the capital. In the terrible outbreak of 66, when every other town of the Maritime Plain was divided into two camps,[2] and Jews and Hellenised Syrians massacred each other, Joppa alone remained Jewish, and it was Joppa that Cestius Gallus first attacked on his march to Jerusalem.[3] In the years before the Jews thus took to arms Joppa had doubtless been distinguished by the more peaceful exercises of the same Judaistic spirit. On ground which was free from heathen buildings and rites, the Pharisees must have imitated as far as possible the rigorous measures of the Maccabees, and cherished the ancient and noble hopes which the sea inspired in their race, along with many petty precautions against the foreigners whom it drifted to their feet. This was the state of affairs when Peter came down from Jerusalem to Joppa, and dreamt of things clean and unclean, on the housetop overlooking the harbour.[4]

If now we turn to the neighbouring Cæsarea, we see as great a contrast as was possible on the same coast. Was

[1] Josephus xv. *Antt.* vii. 3; ii. *Wars*, vi. 3.
[2] ii. *Wars*, xviii. 2.
[3] *Ib.* 10.
[4] Acts x.

Joppa Jewish, national, patriotic, Cæsarea was Herodian, Roman in obedience, Greek in culture. At first the Herodian strongholds had all lain on the east of Palestine, and for the most part in wild, inaccessible places, like Machærus and Masada, as best became a family not sure of its station, and sometimes chased from power by its enemies. But when Herod won the favour of Augustus, and time made it clear that the power of Augustus was to be permanent, Herod came over the Central Range of Palestine, and on sites granted by his patron built himself cities that looked westward. He embellished and fortified both Jerusalem and Samaria. Then he looked for a sea-port. On the coast Augustus had given him Gaza, with Anthedon, Joppa and Straton's Tower.[1] He chose the last—Josephus says because it was more fit to be a sea-port than Joppa. But this was not so. The reasons of his choice were political. We must suppose, it was more important for Herod to have a harbour suited to Sebasté than to Jerusalem, for Sebasté itself was nearer the sea and more in his own hands than the Holy City. Besides, Joppa, as we have seen, was national rather than Herodian in spirit. Straton's Tower was virtually a fresh site. Here Herod laid the lines of 'a magnificent city,' and spent twelve years in building it.[2] He erected sumptuous palaces and large edifices for 'containing the people,' a temple on raised ground, a theatre, and an amphitheatre with prospect to the sea. There were also a great number of arches, cellars, and vaults for draining the city, 'which had no less of architecture bestowed on them than had the buildings

Cæsarea.

[1] i. *Wars*, xx. 3.

[2] Josephus xv. *Antt.* ix. 6; but in xvi. *Antt.* v. i., 'ten years.'

above ground.' But the greatest work of all was the haven. A breakwater 200 feet wide was formed in twenty fathoms depth by dropping into the waves enormous stones. The half of it was opposed to the course of the waves, so as to keep off those waves which were to break upon it, and so was called Procymatia, or 'first breaker of waves,' while the other half had upon it a wall with several towers. There were also a great number of arches, where the sailors lodged, and before them a quay, which ran round the whole haven, and 'was a most pleasant walk for such as had a mind to that exercise.' The entrance of the port was on 'the north, on which side was the gentlest of all the winds in this place.' On the left of the entrance was a round turret, made very strong in order to meet the greatest waves, while on the right stood two enormous stones upright and joined together, each of them larger than the turret opposite.[1] To-day the mole is 160 yards from shore, and the mouth of the harbour measures 180.[2] This immense haven had a name to itself—Sebastos Limen —which even dwarfed the name of the city, Cæsarea.[3] In later times the latter is called The Cæsarea beside the August Harbour,[4] and Jews also, as we have seen, spoke of the Lemînah by itself; for it was *the* harbour—the first, the only real port upon that coast. Cæsarea speedily became, and long continued to be, the virtual capital of Palestine—the only instance of a coast town which ever

[1] Josephus xv. *Antt.* ix. 6, abridged. [2] *P.E.F. Mem.* ii.

[3] Καισαρεία Σεβαστή: Καισαρεία Παραλιός, Καισαρεία ἡ ἐπὶ θαλάττῃ. Cæsarea Stratonis, Cæsarea Palestinæ, and, after Vespasian's time, Colonia Prima Flavia Augusta Cæsarea. The last name in Pliny, *Natural History*, v. 69, and in a Latin inscription discovered in the neighbourhood.

[4] On a coin of Nero: ΚΑΙΣΑΡΕΙΑ Η ΠΡΟΣ ΣΕΒΑΣΤΩ ΛΙΜΕΝΙ. The coin is given in De Saulcy's *Numismatique de la Terre Sainte*, p. 116.

did so. 'Cæsarea Judæae caput est,' says Tacitus,[1] but he means the Roman province of that name. Judæan, in the true sense of the word, Cæsarea never was. The gateway to Rome, the place was already a piece of Latin soil.[2] The procurator had his seat in it, there was an Italian garrison, and on the great white temple that shone out over the harbour to the far seas, stood two statues—of Augustus and of Rome.[3] It was heathendom in all its glory at the very door of the true religion! Yes, but the contrast might be reversed. It was justice and freedom in the most fanatical and turbulent province of the world. In seeking separation from his people, and an open door to the West, Herod had secured these benefits for a nobler cause than his own, to which we now turn.

Peter at Joppa.

Peter came to the Joppa which has been described, and it is interesting to note that he came by Lydda—in those days another great centre of Jewish feeling. It was Joppa, Lydda, and Jerusalem which Cestius Gallus singled out as the centres of the national revolt.[4] To Jewish Joppa Jewish Peter came; and we can understand that as he moved about its narrow lanes, leading to the sea, where his scrupulous countrymen were jostled by foreign sailors and foreign wares, he grew more concerned than ever about the ceremonial law. While food was being prepared—observe the legal moment—*he saw*, above this jealous bit of earth, *heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending as it had been a great sheet*—perhaps the sail of one of these large Western ships in the offing—*let down by the four corners to the earth, wherein*

[1] *Hist.* ii. 78.

[2] The Jews called Cæsarea the daughter of Edom—their symbolic name for Rome. *Talmud Babyl. Megillah*, 6a.

[3] Josephus as above.

[4] ii. *Wars*, xviii. 10.

were all the four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter, kill and eat! But Peter said, Not so, Lord, for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean. To his strict conscience the contents had been a temptation. *And the voice said unto him a second time, What God hath cleansed call not thou common! This was done thrice, and the vessel was received up into heaven again.*

And at Cæsarea.

The vision took place in Joppa, but the fact was fulfilled in freer Cæsarea. Here, on what was virtually Gentile soil, and amid surroundings not very different from those of Paul's sermon on Areopagus,[1] Peter made his similar declaration, *Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons ; but in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him.* Here, in a Roman soldier's house, in face of the only great port broken westward through Israel's stormy coast, the Gentile Pentecost took place, and *on the Gentiles was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.*[2]

Paul at Cæsarea.

Again, in the narrative of Paul's missions, Cæsarea is the harbour by which he reaches Syria from Ephesus, and from which he sails on his last voyage for Italy.[3] More significant still were his removal to Cæsarea from Jerusalem, and the anxiety of the Jewish authorities to get him brought back to Jerusalem.[4] In the Holy City they would not give him a fair hearing ; his life was in danger, they lay in wait to kill him. In Cæsarea he was heard to the end of his plea ; but for his appeal to Cæsar, he would have been acquitted, and during two

[1] Josephus says that the Limen of Cæsarea was like the Piraeus ; and the great temple and court of justice stood hard by.

[2] Acts x.

[3] Acts xviii. 22 ; xxvii. 1.

[4] Acts xxv. 3.

whole years in which he lived in the place, receiving his friends, and enjoying a certain amount of liberty—though the place had many Jewish inhabitants[1]—no one ventured to waylay him. There were only some sixty miles between Cæsarea and Jerusalem, but in the year 60 Cæsarea was virtually Rome.

Cæsarea in subsequent history.

The subsequent history of Herod's harbour repeats what we have already learned of it. As long as the land was held by men with interests in the West, the town triumphed over the unsuitableness of its site; but when Palestine passed into the hands of an Eastern people, with no maritime ambitions, it dwindled, and was finally destroyed by them. Cæsarea was Vespasian's head-quarters, equally opportune for Galilee, Samaria and Judæa, and there he was proclaimed Emperor in 69. He also established close by a colony under the title Prima Flavia Augusta Cæsarea. Very early there was a Christian bishop of Cæsarea, who became Metropolitan of Syria. Origen fled here, and Eusebius was Archbishop from 315-318. When the Moslems came, Cæsarea was the head-quarters of Sergius, the Byzantine general: in 638 it was occupied by 'Abu 'Obeida. Under the Arabs its importance, of course, sank. The town continued opulent, but famous only for its agricultural products,[2] and Herod's splendid harbour must have fallen into decay. The town was left alone by the first Crusaders, but King Baldwin took it in 1102, and thus passing once more into the hands of seafarers it was rebuilt, so that the ruins of to-day are mostly of Crusading masonry.[3] Saladin

[1] ii. *Wars*, xiv. 4.

[2] Mukaddasi in the tenth, and Nâsir-i-Khusrau in the eleventh, cent. quoted by Le Strange, *Pal. under Moslems*, 474.

[3] *P.E.F. Mem.* ii.

won it in 1187, and reduced it.[1] Richard took it back in 1191, and built it again. Louis of France added fortifications. And then Sultan Bibars, consummating the policy of his race by that destructive march of his in 1265, on which every coast fortress was battered down, laid Cæsarea low, and scattered its inhabitants. It is said that he himself, pick in hand, assisted at its demolition.[2]

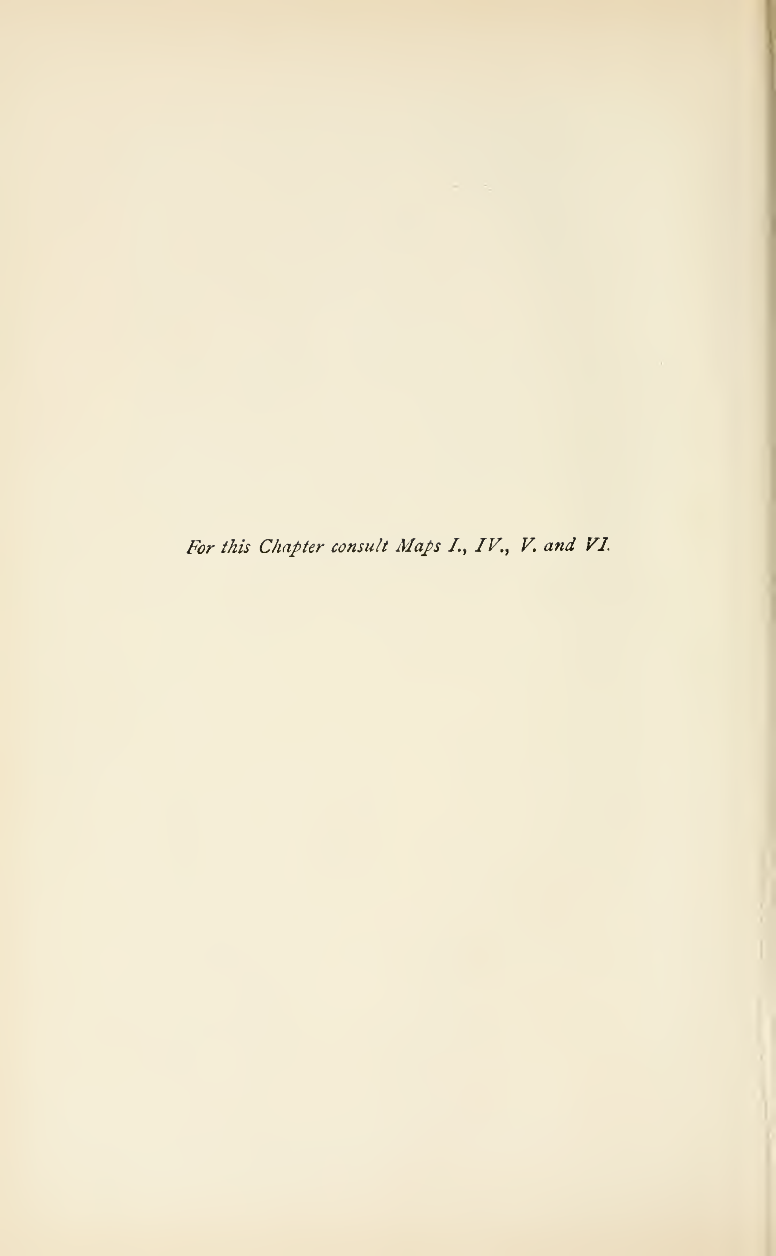
When we come to deal with the strongholds of Samaria, we shall see how Sebasté, which is only some twenty-five miles inland from Cæsarea, and has the same western exposure, has suffered similar changes of fortune according as an Eastern or a Western race dominated the country.

[1] Boha-ed-din, *Life of Saladin*, ch. 35

[2] Makrizi.

CHAPTER VIII

THE MARITIME PLAIN



For this Chapter consult Maps I., IV., V. and VI.

THE MARITIME PLAIN

BEYOND the forbidding coast there stretches, as you look east, a prospect of plain, the Maritime Plain—on the north cut swiftly down upon by Carmel, whose headland comes within 200 yards of the sea, but at Carmel's other end six miles broad, and thence gradually widening southwards, till at Joppa there are twelve miles, and farther south there are thirty miles between the far blue mountains of Judæa and the sea. The Maritime Plain divides into three portions. The north corner between Carmel and the sea is bounded on the south by the Crocodile River, the modern Nahr-el-Zerka, and is nearly twenty miles long. From the Crocodile River the Plain of Sharon, widening from eight miles to twelve, rolls southward, forty-four miles to the mouth of the Nahr Rubin and a line of low hills to the south of Ramleh. This country is undulating, with groups of hills from 250 to 300 feet high. To the north it is largely wild moor and marsh, with long tongues of sand running in from the coast. The marshes on the Zerka are intricate, and form the refuge of Arabs who keep themselves free from the requisitions of the Turkish Government. There is one large oak-wood in the very north, and groves of the same tree scatter southward. These are the remains of a forest so extensive, that it sometimes gave its

Sharon.

name to the plain. The Septuagint translates Sharon by *Drumos*.[1] Josephus describes it as the 'place called the Forest,'[2] or 'The Forests,'[3] and Strabo calls it 'a great Forest.'[4] It is the same which the Crusaders named the Forest of Assur;[5] Tasso the Enchanted Forest,[6] and Napoleon the Forest of Miski.[7] Scattered and ragged as it now is, like all the woodland of Palestine, it must originally have swept all the way from the heights of Carmel to Ajalon. Besides the streams mentioned, the northern part of Sharon is crossed by a few other perennial waters—the Mufjir or Dead River of the Crusaders,[8] the Iskanderuneh or their Salt River, and the Falik or their Rochetaille.[9] In the southern half of Sharon, south of the 'Aujeh and in front of the broad gulf of Ajalon, there is far more cultivation—corn-fields, fields of melons, gardens, orange-groves, and groves of palms, with strips of coarse grass and sand, frequent villages on mounds, the once considerable towns of Jaffa, Lydda, and Ramleh, and the high road running among them to Jerusalem. To the south of the low hills that bound Sharon, the Plain of Philistia rolls on to the river of Egypt, about forty miles, rising now and again into gentle ranges 250 feet high, and cut here and there by a deep gully, with running water. But Philistia is mostly level, nearly all capable of cultivation, with few trees, and presenting the view of a vast series of corn-fields. Wells may be dug almost anywhere.

Philistia or Daroma.

[1] Isaiah xxxv., xxxvii. 24, lxv. 10.
[2] i. *Wars*, xiii. 2.
[3] xiv. *Antt.* xiii. 3.
[4] xvi.: δρυμὸς μέγας τις.
[5] Vinsauf, *Itin. Ricardi*, iv. 16. One of the feudal manors of the neighbourhood was called Casale de la Forest. Röhricht, *Studien zur mittelalt. Geog. u. Topogr. Syrien's Z.D.P.V.* x. 200.
[6] *Gerusalemme Liberata*, ii. and xiii.
[7] From the present village of Miskieh.
[8] But see Röhricht as above, p. 251.
[9] Vinsauf, *Itin. Ric.* iv. 17.

The only difficulty to agriculture is the drifting sand, which in some places has come two and a half miles inland.

The whole Maritime Plain possesses a quiet but rich beauty. If the contours are gentle the colours are strong and varied. Along almost the whole seaboard runs a strip of links and downs, sometimes of pure drifting sand, sometimes of grass and sand together. Outside this border of broken gold there is the blue sea, with its fringe of foam. Landward the soil is a chocolate brown, with breaks and gullies, now bare to their dirty white shingle and stagnant puddles, and now full of rich green reeds and rushes that tell of ample water beneath. Over corn and moorland a million flowers are scattered—poppies, pimpernels, anemones, the convolvulus and the mallow, the narcissus and blue iris—*roses of Sharon and lilies of the valley.* Lizards haunt all the sunny banks. The shimmering air is filled with bees and butterflies, and with the twittering of small birds, hushed now and then as the shadow of a great hawk blots the haze. Nor when darkness comes is all a blank. The soft night is sprinkled thick with glittering fireflies.

Openness of the plain.

Such a plain, rising through the heat by dim slopes to the long persistent range of blue hills beyond, presents to-day a prospect of nothing but fruitfulness and peace. Yet it has ever been one of the most famous war-paths of the world. It is not only level, it is open. If its coast-line is so destitute of harbours, both its ends form wide and easy entrances. The southern rolls off upon the great passage from Syria to Egypt; upon those illustrious, as well as horrible, ten sandy marches from Gaza—past Rafia, Rhinocoloura, 'the

Serbonian Bog,' and the sands where Pompey was stabbed to death—to Pelusium and the Nile. Of this historical highway between Asia and Africa, along which Thothmes, Ramses, Sennacherib, Cambyses, Alexander, Pompey, Titus, Saladin, Napoleon and many more great generals have led their armies—of this highway the Maritime Plain of Palestine is but the continuation.

The passage by Carmel.

Nor is the north end of the plain shut in by Carmel, as the view from the sea clearly shows. From the sea the sky-line of Carmel, running south-east, does not sustain its high level up to the Central Range. It is bow-shaped, rising from the sea to its centre, and drooping again inland. At the sea end, under the headland, a beach of 200 yards is left, and southwards there is always from a mile to two miles between the hill-foot and the shore. But this passage, though often used by armies—by Richard, for instance, and by Napoleon on his retreat—is not the historical passage round Carmel, and could not be. It is broken by rocks, and extremely difficult to force if defended, so that the Crusaders called part of it the House of the Narrow Ways, Les Destroits, and Petra Incisa.[1] It is at the other, the inland, end of Carmel that the historical passage lies. Here a number of low hills, with wide passes, and one great valley—the Valley of Dothan—intervene between Carmel and the Central Range, and offer several alternative routes from the Maritime Plain to Esdraelon. Napoleon, who followed one of these routes on his northern march, has stated his reasons for doing so in words which emphasise the very points we are considering: 'Carmel se lie aux

[1] Vinsauf, *Itiner. Ricardi*, iv. 12, 14. Les Destroits survives in Khurbet Dustrey.

montagnes de Nablouse, mais elle en est séparée par un grand vallon'—that is, the low hills of softer formation, whose subdued elevation seems as a valley between the harder heights of Carmel and Samaria. 'On a l'avantage de tourner Mont Carmel par la route qui suit la lisière de la plaine d'Esdrelon'—that is, after it reaches the water-shed—'au lieu que celle qui longe la mer arrive au detroit de Haifa'—that is, the sea-pass which the Crusaders called Les Destroits—'passage difficile à forcer s'il était defendu.'[1] The route Napoleon chose, to the east of Carmel, was of the three which are usually followed the most westerly, for his goal was Acre. From the north end of Sharon it strikes due north, past Subbarin, and, descending to the east of the Muhrakah, reaches Esdraelon at Tell Keimun. It is the shortest road from Sharon and Egypt to the Phœnician cities, and is to-day followed by the telegraph wire. Another route leaves Sharon at Khurbet es-Sumrah, strikes north-east up the Wady 'Arah to the watershed at 'Ain 'Ibrahim, and thence descends to Lejjun, from which roads branch to Nazareth, Tiberias, and by Jezreel to Jordan. A third, and more frequented route, leaves Sharon still farther south, and, travelling almost due east by a long wady,[2] emerges upon the Plain of Dothan, and thence descends north-east to Jenîn, in Esdraelon. This road is about seventeen miles long, but for Beisan and the Jordan Valley, it is much shorter than the route by Lejjun, and is, no doubt, the historical road from Egypt to the east of the Jordan and Damascus. It was on this road near Dothan that Joseph's brethren, having cast him into a pit, *lifted up their*

[1] *Campagnes d'Égypte et de Syrie Memoires . . . dictées par lui-même*, ii. 55.

[2] W. 'Abu-Nâr, afterwards W. el Ghamik and W. Wesa.

eyes, and behold, a company of Ishmaelites came from Gilead, with their camels, bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt.[1]

Its historical effect.

To this issue of Sharon into Esdraelon, which is hardly ever noticed in manuals of sacred geography, too much attention cannot be paid. Its presence is felt by all the history of the land. No pass had more effect upon the direction of campaigns, the sites of great battles, or the limitation of Israel's actual possessions. We shall more fully see the effects of it when we come to study the Plain of Esdraelon. Here it is enough to mention such facts as illustrate the real continuity of Esdraelon and Sharon. In ancient Egyptian records of travel and invasion,[2] names on Esdraelon and the Jordan are almost as frequent as those on the Maritime Plain, and a journey is recounted which took place in a chariot from the Lake of Galilee to Egypt. On this Bethshan and Megiddo, which is Lejjun, and Joppa were all stations. In the Bible the Philistines and Egyptians are frequently represented in Esdraelon. It must surprise the reader of the historical books, that Saul and Jonathan

[1] Gen xxxvii. 25.

The following are the levels relative to these routes: The headland of Carmel is some 500 feet above the sea; thence the ridge rises, in rather over eleven miles, to 1810 feet; thence suddenly sinks to 800 or 1000, the height of the pass by Subbarin to Tell Keimun. Then come, almost at right angles to Carmel, the series of lower ranges—for eight miles the Belad er-Ruhah, 'a district of bare chalk downs, with an average elevation of 800 feet' (*P.E.F. Mem.* ii.), fertile, but treeless, except on the western slope; then eight or ten miles of higher hills, some of which reach 1600 feet; then Dothan, and then the hills of Samaria. The watershed at 'Ain 'Ibrahim, where the Lejjun road crosses, is as high as 1100 feet. Dothan is 700. Sharon, at its margin, is 200, and this may be taken as the level also of Esdraelon, though Lejjun is over 400 and Jenîn over 500.

[2] *Travels of an Egyptian*, 1. *R.P.*, ii. 107 ff.; *Annals of Thothmes III.*, *ib.* p. 39 ff. Cf. W. Max-Müller, *Asien und Europa*. p. 105 ff.

should have come so far north as Gilboa to fight with Philistines, whose border was to the south of them, and that King Josiah should meet the Egyptians at Megiddo. The explanation is afforded by the easy passage of Sharon into Esdraelon. The Philistines had come by it, either to make the easier entrance into Israel from the north, or to keep open the great trade route to Gilead ; the Egyptians had come by it, because they were making for Damascus and the Euphrates.

The roads of the plain.

Between these, its open ends, the Maritime Plain was traversed by highways, which have followed, through all ages, pretty much the same direction. Coming up from Egypt, the trunk road crossed the Wady Ghuzzeh near Tell el 'Ajjul—Calf's Hill—a favourite Saracen camp,[1] and continued through Gaza and past Mejdel to Ashdod, avoiding the coast, for the sand on the Philistine coast comes far inland, and is loose. After Ashdod it forked. One branch struck through Jamnia to Joppa, and thence up the coast by 'Arsûf and Cæsarea to Haifa,[2] with Roman bridges over the streams. The other branch, used in the most ancient times, as well as by the Romans and Saracens, and still the main caravan road between Egypt and Damascus, strikes from Ashdod farther inland, by Ekron to Ramleh, and thence travels by Lydda and Antipatris to the passes leading over to Esdraelon. This road was joined by roads from the hills at Gaza, Ashdod, Ramleh—where the Beth-horon road from Jerusalem, and another from Beit-Jibrin, through the Shephelah, came in,—at Antipatris,—where the road from Jerusalem to Cæsarea, by which Paul was brought down,

[1] It was Saladin's twice.

[2] According to Brugsch, the royal Egyptian road.

crossed it,[1] and near Gilgal and Kakon, where passes descended from Shechem and Sebasté. The inland high-road was also joined by a cross-road from Joppa near Antipatris. All these roads were fairly well supplied with water.

Its defences.

The natural obstacles were few, and easily turned. The inland road avoided the streams and marshes which the coast road had to traverse, and which do not seem to have been bridged till the Romans came. Some fortresses, as in the south the Philistine cities, and in the north 'Arsûf and Cæsarea, might form bases or flanks for long lines of defence, but they stood by themselves, and could be easily turned, as Geoffrey turned Cæsarea in the First Crusade. Strong lines were drawn across the plain at only two places that we know of. The deep, muddy bed of the 'Aujeh tempted Alexander Janneus to build a wall from Kapharsaba to the sea at Joppa, with wooden towers and intermediate redoubts; but 'Antiochus soon burnt them, and made his army pass that way to Arabia.'[2] And, again, Saladin's army, with its left on the strong fortress of 'Arsûf, and its right on the Samarian hills, strove to keep Richard back, but were dispersed after two heavy battles.[3] Napoleon's march is the one we know in most detail. He was under the necessity of taking two fortresses—Gaza and Joppa—and was attacked by a body of Samarians from Nablus as he passed Kakon. His experiences may be fairly taken as those likely to have happened to most invaders from north and south, except that when it was the Jews who

[1] The part of this road through the hill-country was traced by Ely Smith in 1840, but the level part from Antipatris to Cæsarea has still to be recovered.

[2] Josephus, xiii. *Antt.* xv. 1. Cf. i. *Wars*, iv. 1.

[3] Vinsauf, *Itiner. Ricard.* iv. 14-24.

opposed the invader, they came down Ajalon, and flung themselves across his path from Lydda, Gezer, and Joppa.

The campaigns of the plain.

We now see why the Maritime Plain was so famous a war-path. It is really not the whole of Palestine which deserves that name of The Bridge between Asia and Africa; it is this level and open coast-land along which the embassies and armies of the two continents passed to and fro, not troubling themselves, unless they were provoked, with the barren and awkward highlands to the east. So Thothmes passed north to the Hittite frontier and the Euphrates. So Rameses came. So, from 740 to 710, Tiglath-Pileser, Shalmaneser, and Sargon swept south across Jordan and Esdraelon to the cities of the Philistines, entering Samaria, whose open gateways they found at Jenîn and Kakon,[1] but leaving Judah alone. So, in 701, Sennacherib marched his army to the borders of Egypt, and detached a brigade for the operations on Jerusalem, which Isaiah has so vividly described. So Necho went up to the border of Assyria, and Nebuchadnezzar came down to the border of Egypt. So Cambyses passed and left Judæa alone. So Alexander the Great passed between his siege of Tyre and that of Gaza, and passed back from Egypt to Tyre, entering Samaria by the way to punish the inhabitants of Shechem.[2] So the Antiochi from Syria and the Ptolemies from Egypt surged up and down in alternate tides, carrying fire and rapine to each other's borders. From their hills the Jews could watch all the spectacle of war between them and the sea—the burning villages, the swift, busy lines of chariots and cavalry—years before Jerusalem

[1] Jenîn on Esdraelon, Kakon on Sharon.

[2] The account of his march into Jerusalem is fictitious.

herself was threatened.[1] When Judas Maccabeus burnt the harbour and ships at Jamnia, 'the light of the fire was seen at Jerusalem, two hundred and forty stadia off.'[2] In Roman times legions marched and countermarched too often to mention; and they made great roads, and bridged the streams with bridges, some of which last to this day.

In the first Moslem assaults the Maritime Plain bore less of the brunt than the eastern parts of the land, but in the European invasions of the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries it was again, as in Greek and Roman times, scoured by war. While Geoffrey and the First Crusade passed unhindered from Haifa to Ramleh,[3] Richard and the Third Crusade had to skirmish every league of the way with an enemy that harassed them from the Samarian valleys, and to fight one great battle under Arsûf, and another on the east of Joppa.[4] In the Philistine Plain innumerable conflicts, sieges, and forays took place, for while the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem lasted, it met here the assaults of the Egyptian Moslems, and when Richard came he had here at once to repel the sallies of the Moslem from Jerusalem, and intercept the aid coming to them from Egypt. In 1265 Bibars came north, and one by one demolished the fortresses so thoroughly, that some of them, like Askalon and Cæsarea, famous for centuries before, have been desolate ever since. But perhaps this garden of the Lord was never more violated than when Napoleon, in the spring of 1799, brought up his army from Egypt, or when, in the heat of summer, he retreated, burning the towns and harvests of Philistia and massacring his prisoners.[5]

[1] Isa. v. 26 ff. [2] 2 Macc. xii. 9. The real distance is about 300 stadia.
[3] William of Tyre, vii. 22. [4] Vinsauf, *Itin. Ricardi*, as above.
[5] *Op. cit.* ii. 109. Wittmann, *Travels*, pp. 128, 136.

It was not only war which swept the Maritime Plain. The Plague also came up this way from Egypt. Throughout antiquity the north-east corner of the Delta was regarded with reason as the home of the Plague. The natural conditions of disease were certainly prevalent. The eastern mouth of the Nile then entered the sea at Pelusium, and supplied a great stretch of mingled salt and fresh water under a high temperature.[1] To the west there is the swampy Delta; and on the Asiatic side sand-hills, with only brackish wells. Along the coast there appear to have been always a number of lagoons, separated from the sea by low bars of sand, and used as salt-pans.[2] In Greek and Roman times the largest of these was known as the Serbonian Bog or Marsh.[3] It had a very evil repute. The dry sand blowing across it gave it the appearance of solid ground, which was sufficient to bear those who ventured on it, only till they were beyond flight or rescue, and it swallowed part of more than one unfortunate army.[4] In Justinian's time, the 'Bog' was surrounded by communities of salt-makers and fish-curers; filthy villages of under-fed and imbecile people, who always had disease among them.[5] The extremes of temperature are excessive. It was a very similar state of affairs to that which has been observed in connection with the recent outbreak of plague in Astrakhan.[6] Now all

The Plague.

[1] Always accompanied by fevers, as round the Gulf of Mexico.

[2] Cf. Martin Baumgarten's *Travels* (1507) in Churchhill's Collection, i. 410.

[3] λίμνη Σερβωνίς, Strabo, vii. 59, and Diod. Sic.; *Serbonis Lacus*, Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* v. 13. Cf. Ptol. iv. 5, § 12, 20. It lay parallel to the sea, and was about 200 stadia by 50.

[4] Dio. Sic. i. 5 gives a graphic account of this. Artaxerxes Mnemon lost part of his army here in 350.

[5] Gibbon.

[6] *On the Outbreak of Plague in Astrakhan*, 1878-79, by Dr. Giovanni Cabriadus, *Transactions of the Epidemiological Society*, vol. iv., pt. iv. 449. Cf. on the same subject the *Reports of the German and English Commissions*, *ib.* vol. iv. 362, 276.

armies coming from the north reached these unhealthy conditions, exhausted by an arduous march across the desert. Coming from the south, armies picked up the infection, with the possibility of its breaking out after the heat of the desert was passed, in the damper climate of Syria. Their camps, their waste and offal, with an occasional collapse of their animals in a sandstorm, were frequent aggravations.[1]

Relevant instances are not few in history. Here Sennacherib's victorious army was infected by pestilence, and melted northwards like a cloud ; here in Justinian's time the Plague started more than once a course right across the world ; here a Crusading expedition showed symptoms of the Plague ; here, in 1799, Napoleon's army was infected and carried the disease into Syria : while the Turkish force that marched south, in 1801, found the Plague about Jaffa and in the Delta.[2]

These facts probably provide us with an explanation of two records of disease in the Old Testament. The Philistines, who occupied the open door by which the infection entered Syria,[3] were struck at a time they were in camp

[1] Baumgarten in 1507 saw such a collapse : '10,000 sheep and asses and other creatures lying on the ground rotten and half consumed, the noisome smell of which was so insufferable that we were obliged to make all haste ;' it was a collection of herds which the Sultan of Egypt had caused to be seized in Syria in default of the Syrian tribute. Cf. the similar tribute which Isaiah describes as going down to Egypt through the same dangers, xxx. 6 : *Oracle of the beasts of the Negeb.* See Wittmann, as below, pp. 122 f.

[2] On Sennacherib, see the author's *Isaiah* i. On the Plague in Justinian's time, Evagrius, xxix. ; Gibbon, xliii. ; on Napoleon, the *Memoirs of Campaigns* already cited ; Walsh, *Journal of the late Campaign in Egypt*, 1803, p. 136; especially Wittmann, *Travels*, chs. viii., x., xi. on Plague and Ophthalmia in Maritime Plain. Volney, who says (*Travels*, i. 253) that the Plague always appears on the coast, and is brought from Greece and Syria, is giving a mistaken account of the fact that its home is in NE. corner of the Delta.

[3] All the Commissioners of Inquiry on the Plague of Astrakhan were not

against Israel by two strong symptoms of the Plague—tumours in the groin and sudden and numerous deaths.[1] Among the Israelites, again, the only country which gave its name to a disease was Egypt. *All the sore sicknesses of Egypt of which thou art afraid* is a curse in the Book of Deuteronomy, which is eloquent of the sense of frequent infection from that notorious quarter. One of these *sicknesses* is specified as the *Boil* or *Tumour of Egypt*.[2] That it occurs in the singular number may, of course, be due to its being a continuous eruption on the body, but it seems rather to mean a solitary tumour, and it is interesting that in recent instances of the pestilence, the tumours have generally been one on each person, while in India a local name for the Plague is The Boil.[3]

However this may be, it seems certain that Israel was

equally convinced as to whether the infection can be carried by clothes, but the Germans had no doubt that this outbreak was caused by the carriage to the district of spoil of war.—*Trans. of Epidem. Soc.* iv. 376 ff., *Report of German Commission*; cf. *The Account of the Endemic Plague in India*, *ib.* p. 391, where it is said that it is traders who are mostly attacked.

[1] The name of the thing with which they were smitten, עפלים *'ŏpholîm*, means swellings or boils, 1 Sam. v. 6, 9, 12; and the offerings made to avert the calamity were not only golden boils but golden mice, the symbol of the Plague, *ib.* vi. 5. Cf. Herodotus' account of the disaster to Sennacherib, in which mice play a part, ii. 1. The disease with which Napoleon's army was attacked in Philistia was precisely the same—a very fatal *fièvre à bubons*.

[2] *All the sore sicknesses of Egypt*, Deut. vii. 15, xxviii. 60; *pestilence in the way*, or *after the manner*, *of Egypt*, Amos iv. 10. The Boil (= שחין Shehîn) is applied both to a single tumour like a carbuncle, as in 2 Kings xx. 7, and to an extensive eruption and swelling of the skin, as in Job ii. 7, where it is supposed to be elephantiasis. In Deut. xxviii. 35 it means some extensive disease of the skin.

[3] *Trans. of the Epidem. Soc.*, iv., pt. i. 129 ff. *On Plague and Typhus Fever in India*, Surgeon-General Murray. On solitary tumours, see *ib. Report of German Commission on the Astrakhan Plague*, p. 376, and the cases specified by Dr. Cabriadus in the same Transactions, iv., pt. iv. p. 449, and Surgeon-Major Colville's *Notes on Plague in Province of Baghdad*, *ib.* iv., pt. i. p. 9, where in many the sign of Plague was an enlargement of glans in groin or armpit. See Additional Note, p. 670.

sometimes attacked by epidemics, which, starting from the north-east corner of Egypt, travelled by the short desert route to Syria, and passed up the avenues of trade from the Maritime Plain. The Philistines, as traders, would stand in special danger of infection.

These, then, were the contributions of the Maritime Plain to the history of Israel. It was a channel always busy with Commerce, and often scoured by War and the Plague.

The positions of the cities of the Maritime Plain are of extreme interest. We have surveyed those on the coast.

Cities of the Maritime Plain.

Those inland arrange themselves into two groups. Coming from the north, we find no inland town of any consequence till the 'Aujeh is passed, and then all at once the first group appear at the mouth of the Vale of Ajalon. The second group are separated from these by the low hills on the Nahr Rubin, and consist of the towns of Philistia.

Valley of the Smiths.

It is, of course, the incoming Vale of Ajalon that explains the first group—Ramleh, and Lydda and her sisters, with, perhaps, Antipatris. Lydda, or Lod, with Ono, a little farther out on the plain, and Hadid, on the edge of the hills behind, formed the most westerly of the Jewish settlements after the Exile. The returned Jews naturally pushed down the only broad valley from Jerusalem till they touched the edge of the great thoroughfare which sweeps past it. The site of their settlements here is described as the Ge-haharashim—*the Valley of the Smiths* or *Craftsmen.* It is surely a recollection of the days when there was no *harash* in Israel, but the Hebrews came down to the Philistine border to get their ploughshares and their mattocks sharpened.[1] The frontier posi-

[1] 1 Sam. xiii. 19. Lod, Ono, and Hadid are not given in Joshua (only in

tion of Lydda—according to Josephus, 'a village not less than a city'—made it the frequent subject of battle and treaty between the Jews and their successive enemies.[1] Like all the other inland towns of Sharon, it appears never to have been fortified. It was, as we have seen, one of the centres of Jewish feeling throughout Roman times, and after the destruction of Jerusalem it formed a refuge of the religious leaders of Judaism. After one or other of those revolts of despair, into which the Jews burst during the second and third centuries, Lydda was emptied of everything Jewish, and made pagan, under the name of Diospolis.[2] Judaism disappeared, but Christianity survived, and finally got the upper hand. There was a Bishop of Diospolis in the fourth century, and a Synod of Diospolis, at which Pelagius was tried, early in the fifth.[3] The chief Christian

Lydda.

1 Chron. viii. 12); but Ezra ii. 33 implies that they were Jewish towns before the exile, cf. Neh. vii. 37. Neh. xi. 35 relates their rebuilding, and gives us the name of the district, גֵּי הַחֲרָשִׁים—LXX., γῆ Ἀρασειμ. Conder suggests that Harashim 'survives in the present Hirshah,' *P.E.F.Q.*, 1878, 18.

[1] Especially between the Syrians and the Jews, and the Romans and the Jews. It was confirmed by Ptolemy to Jonathan Maccabeus, 1 Macc. xi. 34, and by Cæsar, with the right to make it thoroughly Jewish, xiv. *Antt.* x. 6. It was the capital of a toparchy, iii. *Wars*, iii. 5. For its adherence to the national side, witness its occupation by Cestius Gallus (see p. 138), as also by Vespasian, iv. *Wars*, vi. That the latter met with no opposition was due to the town's want of fortification.

[2] This is usually supposed to have happened as early as Hadrian's time, when Jerusalem was desecrated. But Schlatter, *Zur Topographie u. Geschichte Palästinas*, No. 2, sets the change of name under Septimius Severus about the year 202 A.D., when Beit-Jibrin also was put under a Greek name. The earliest coins that have been found of Diospolis bear the legend 'L. Septimia Severa Diospolis.' Eusebius and Jerome still know it under that name, though, strange to say, neither Diospolis nor Lydda is the subject of a special article in the *Onomasticon*, but the name Diospolis occurs only in fixing the position of towns like Arimathea, Addara, Adithaim, etc.

[3] 415. He got off, to the wrath of Jerome: *Dialogi adv. Pel.*

interest of Lydda, however, centres round her St. George. There is no hero whom we shall more frequently meet in Palestine, and especially east of Jordan. Indeed, among all the saints, there has been none with a history like this one, who, from obscure origins became not only the virtual patron of Syrian Christendom, and an object of Mohammedan reverence, but patron as well of the most western of all Christian peoples. St. George of Lydda is St. George of England; he is also a venerated personage in Moslem legend. For this triple fame he has to thank his martyrdom on the eve of the triumph of Christianity (to the early Church George is Megalomartyr and Tropaiophoros); the neighbourhood of his shrine to the scene of a great Greek legend; the removal of his relics to Zorava, in Hauran, where his name spread with great rapidity; and the effect of all this, his Syrian reputation, first upon the Moslems before they became impervious to Christian influences, and then on the Crusaders at a crisis in their first invasion. The original George was a soldier of good birth, and served as a military tribune under Diocletian. In 303 he was martyred. According to some, Lydda was the scene of his martyrdom; others place there the property of his family, but say that he suffered in Nicomedia.[1] In either case Lydda received his relics; through the following centuries pilgrims visited his tomb in the town,[2] and there

St. George.

[1] Eusebius, *Eccl. Hist.* viii. 5, tells of 'a certain man of no mean origin, but highly esteemed for his temporal dignities,' who, in Nicomedia, tore down Diocletian's edicts against Christianity, and then heroically met death.

[2] Antonini Placentini *Itinerarium* (*cir.* 570), c. 25: 'Diospolis . . . in qua requiescit Georgius martyr.' The same sentence confounds Diospolis with Ashdod and Cæsarea. Arculf, before 683, Willibald, 728, and Bernard, 865, also mention the tomb. The church does not appear to have been dedicated to St. George; travellers quote only the monastery and the tomb.

was a monastery dedicated to him. A church had stood in Lydda from the earliest times, but it was destroyed on the approach of the First Crusade. A new cathedral was built by the Crusaders over the tomb, and partly because of this, but also in gratitude for the supernatural intervention of the saint in their favour at Antioch, they dedicated it to him. It was a great pile of building, capable of being used as a fortress. So, on the approach of Richard, Saladin destroyed it. Richard, who did more than any man to identify St. George with England,[1] is said to have rebuilt the church; but there is no record of the fact, and it is much more likely that the great bays which the traveller of to-day admires are the ruins that Saladin made.[2] By Crusading times the name of the saint had displaced both Diospolis and Lydda, and the town might have been called St. George till now but for the break in Christian pilgrimage from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries.[3] The Arabs have perpetuated the Hebrew name Lod in their Ludd.

St. George and the Dragon.

The connection of St. George with a dragon can be traced to the end of the sixth century. It was probably due to two sources—to the coincidence of the rise of the martyr's fame with the triumph of Christianity over paganism, and, as M. Clermont Ganneau has forcibly argued, to the conveyance to St. George of the legend of Perseus and Andromeda. It was

[1] It was under Edward III. that St. George became patron of England.

[2] Vinsauf is silent. Robinson's reasons against Richard's building seem conclusive, *Bib. Res.* iii. 54 f.; De Vogüé, *Les Églises de la Terre Sainte*, 363 ff. with plans. Cf. Phocas, 39; Bohaeddin, ch. 121.

[3] So in Crusading documents (*Z.D.P.V.* x. 215), but even as late as in 1506, in *Die Jerusalemfahrt des Caspar von Mulinen*: 'Und reit der Herre fon Ramen und der Herre fon Sant Joergen unc gon Jaffen' (*Z.D.P.V.* xi. 195).

in the neighbourhood of Lydda—at Arsûf or Joppa—that Perseus slew the sea-monster which threatened the virgin; and we know how often Christian saints have been served heir to the fame of heathen worthies who have preceded them in the reverence of their respective provinces. But the legend has an even more interesting connection. The Mohammedans, who usually identify St. George with the prophet Elijah—El Khudr, the forerunner of Messiah—at Lydda confound his legend with another about Christ Himself. Their name for Antichrist is Dajjâl, and they have a tradition that Jesus will slay Antichrist by the gate of Lydda. This notion sprang from an ancient bas-relief of St. George and the Dragon on the Lydda church. But Dajjâl may be derived, by a very common confusion between *n* and *l*, from Dagôn, whose name two neighbouring villages—Dajûn and Bet Dajôn—bear to this day, while one of the gates of Lydda used to be called the Gate of Dagôn.[1] If the derivation be correct, then, it is indeed a curious process by which the monster, symbolic of heathenism conquered by Christianity, has been evolved out of the first great rival of the God of Israel. And could there be a fitter scene for such a legend than the town where Hebrew touched Philistine, Jew struggled with Greek, and Christendom contested with Islam? To-day the population is mostly Mohammedan, and the greater part of the cathedral a mosque; but there is still a Christian congregation in Lydda, who worship in the nave and an aisle; and once a year, on the anniversary of their great saint, whom even the Moslems reverence, they are permitted to celebrate Mass at the high altar over his tomb.[2]

[1] Clermont Ganneau, *P.E.F. Mem.* ii.

[2] For such details of the above as are not in M. Clermont Ganneau's papers I am indebted to Guérin's *Judée*, i.

About 700 Lydda suffered one of her many overthrows. The Arab general[1] who was the cause saw the necessity of building another town in the neighbourhood to command the junction of the roads from the coast to the interior with the great caravan route from Egypt to Damascus. He chose a site nearly three miles from Lydda, and called the town Ramleh, 'the sandy,' and, indeed, there is no other feature to characterise it. Like the cathedrals of the plains of Europe, the mosque of Ramleh has a lofty tower, from which all the convergent roads may be surveyed for miles. Ramleh was once fortified. It suffered the varying fortunes of the wars of the Crusades, and since it became Mohammedan, in 1266, its Christian convent has continued to provide shelter to pilgrims on the road to Jerusalem.[2]

Ramleh.

From Ramleh it is a long way back in time to Antipatris. Antipatris was one of the creations of Herod, and appears to have been built not as a fortress, but as a pleasant residence. Its site was probably not where Robinson placed it, at the present Kefr Saba, but southward, near the present El-Mir. Here is all the wealth of water which Josephus describes, as well as sufficient ruins to demonstrate that the site was once a place of importance.[3]

Antipatris.

[1] Suleiman, son of the Khalif 'Abd-el-Melek, according to Abulfeda.

[2] Pilgrims used to wait here till the frequently delayed permission was granted them to go on to Jerusalem. Felix Fabri, i., etc., etc.

[3] See Robinson, *Bib. Res.* ii. 45-47. The credit of the discovery of the other site is due to the P.E.F. Survey under Conder (see *P.E.F. Mem.* ii. 258 ff.). Though in one passage Josephus says Antipatris was on the site of Kefr Saba (xvi. *Antt.* v. 2), in another he describes it more generally as in the Plain of Kefr Saba (ii. *Wars*, xxi. 9).



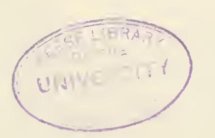
CHAPTER IX

THE PHILISTINES AND THEIR CITIES





For this Chapter consult Maps I. and IV.



JUDEA, THE SHEPHELAH, AND PHILISTIA.

PLATE IV



THE PHILISTINES AND THEIR CITIES

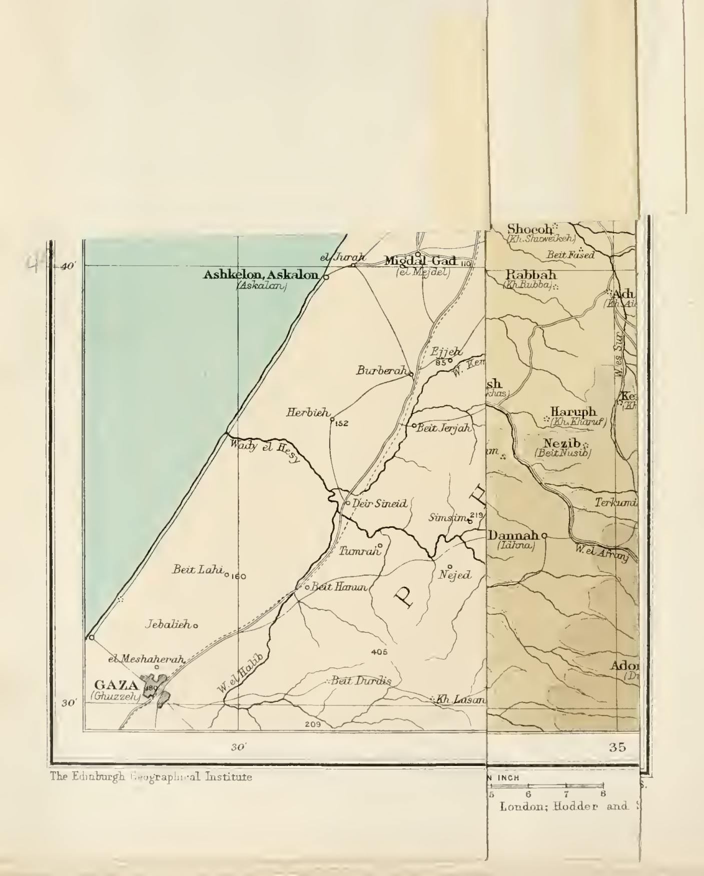
THE singularity and importance of the Palestine towns demand their separation from the rest of the Maritime Plain, and their treatment in a chapter by themselves.

The chief cities of the Philistine League were five—Gaza, 'Askalon, 'Ashdod, 'Ekron, and Gath; but Jamneh, or Jamniel, is generally associated with them. Only one—'Askalon—is directly on the sea; the others dominate the trunk-road which, as we have seen, through Philistia keeps inland. None of them lie north of the low hills by the Nahr Rubin. These two facts, with the well-known distinction of the Philistines from the Canaanites or Phœnicians, point to an immigration from the south and an interest in the land trade.

This is confirmed by all that we know of the history of this strange people. In the LXX. the name Philistines is generally translated by Allophuloi (Vulg. *aliegenæ*) 'aliens'; and it has suggested a derivation from *falash*, a Semitic root, 'to migrate.'[1] In the Old Testament there is a very distinct memory of

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Ashkelon, Askalon
(Askalon)
el Jurah
Migdal-Gad
(el Mejdel)
Shocoh
(Kh. Shuweikeh)
Beit Fased
Rabbah
(Kh. Rubba)
Ejjeh
Burberah
Herbieh
Beit Jerjah
Wady el Hesy
Haruph
(Kh. Kharuf)
Nezib
(Beit Nusib)
W. es Sur
Deir Sineid
Simsim
Terkumi
Dannah
(Idhna)
W. el Afranj
Tumrah
Beit Lahi
Nejed
Beit Hanun
Jebalieh
el Meshaherah
W. el Halib
GAZA
(Ghuzzeh)
Beit Durdis
Kh. Lasan
40′
30′
35
The Edinburgh Geographical Institute
INCH
London; Hodder and

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such a migration: *O children of Israel, saith Jehovah, have I not brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Kaphtor, and the Syrians from Kir? The Kaphtorim, which came forth from Kaphtor, destroyed the Avim, which dwelt in open villages as far as Gaza, and dwelt in their stead.*[1] Where the Philistines came from, and what they originally were, is not clear. That they moved up the coast from Egypt is certain;[2] that they came from Kaphtor is also certain. But it by no means follows, as some argue, that Kaphtor and Egypt are the same region.[3] On the contrary, Kaphtor seems to be outside Egypt;[4] and as the Philistines are

Their origin.

Pilista the Assyrians meant Judah as well as the Philistine cities—a remarkable precedent for what happened in Greek times, when the name of Philistia was extended across the whole country behind. Pelesheth has a Semitic appearance which Pelishtim, showing the root to be quadriliteral, has not. The name is supposed to survive in the names of several localities in the Shephelah hills—at Keratiyeh el Fenîsh by Beit-Jibrin, Arâk el Fenîsh, Bestan el Fenîsh—also at Latrûn, Soba, Amwas, and Khurbet Ikbala. All these places are on the borderland of ancient Philistia, and the name does not occur elsewhere. See Conder in *P.E.F. Mem.* vol. iii. 294.

[1] Amos ix. 7; Deut. ii. 23.

[2] From the unlikelihood of their landing on the coast, from the traces in the Old Testament of their settlement to the south of Gaza before they occupied it (the stories of the patriarchs and Book of Joshua), and from Gen. x. 14, whether you read the clause in brackets where it stands, or at the end of the verse. The Pathrusim and Casluhim are practically Egypt; *out of whom* should be *whence*. But some take this clause as a gloss.

[3] Egyptologists like Ebers (*Ægypten u. die Bücher Mosis*) and Sayce (*Races of the O.T.*, 53-54, 127, a popular statement) assert that Kaphtor is Kaft-ur, 'the greater Phœnicia,' applied to the Delta by the Egyptians. But see p. 197. Before this Reland (p. 74) had placed Kaphtor 'in ora Maritima Ægypti contra Pelusium,' and 'suspected' a connection between the names Pelusium and Pelesheth. Cf. Plutarch's *De Isi et Osiri*, xvii., which speaks of a youth, Pelusius or Palæstinus, after whom Iris names Pelusium.

[4] I cannot think that if Kaphtor had been part of the Delta, it would have been given as distinct from Egypt, in Amos ix. 8. On the other hand, the reason given by Dillmann (on Gen. x. 14), that אִי is applied to Kaphtor in Jer. xlvii. 4, is not conclusive, for אִי is also applicable to the Delta coast.

also called Kerethîm,[1] and the connection between Egypt and Crete was always a close one, and certain traditions trace the inhabitants of Palestine to Crete, it appears more safe to identify Kaphtor with that island.[2] But to have traced the Philistines to Crete is not to have cleared up their origin, for early Crete was full of tribes from both east and west.[3] The attempt has been made to derive the name Philistine from the Pelasgians, or from a Pelasgic clan called Peneste, and to prove in detail that Philistine names and institutions are Aryan.[4] But Crete shows signs of having been once partly colonised by Semites, and it is possible that some of these, after a long contact with Greek tribes, returned eastward.[5] In that case their natural goal, as with the eastward-faring Greeks, would be, not the harbourless coast of South Syria, but the mouths of the Nile. Now, the little that we know of the Philistines, while not, indeed, proving such a theory, does

Kaphtor.

[1] Zeph. ii. 5; Ezek. xxiv. Cf. 1 Sam. xx. 14.

[2] That Kaphtor is not mentioned in Gen. x. 4, with other Mediterranean islands, as a son of Javan, is due to the fact that Crete was regarded as connected, not with the north, but with the south coast of the Mediterranean. It is scarcely necessary now to say that the arrangement in Gen. x. is not ethnological, but mainly geographical. The traditions referred to in the text are the connection which the inhabitants of Gaza alleged between their god Marna and the Cretan Jove, and the statement in Tacitus, *Hist.* v. 2: 'Judæos Creta insula profugos, novissima Libyæ insedisse, memorant, qua tempestate Saturnus vi Jovis expulsus cesserit regnis.' He seeks to explain this tradition by the analogy between Idæi, from Mount Ida, and Judæi. It must be kept in mind that these late traditions may have arisen from a connection between Crete and the Philistine coast in Hellenic times—*i.e.* after Alexander the Great. Gaza especially had then great trade with the west.

[3] Cf. *Odyssey*, xix. 170 ff. Achæans, Kydonians, Dorians, Pelasgians, and aboriginal Cretans—ἐτεόκρητοι.

[4] Hitzig, *Urgeschichte u. Mythologie der Philistäer*, where the most extraordinary Sanscrit analogies are suggested. The argument has been still more overdone by the article in Schenkel's *Bibel-Lexicon*.

[5] Knobel's opinion (*Völkertafel Gen.* x.) was that the Philistines were Egyptians who had sojourned in Crete.

not contradict it. Take them as a whole, and the Philistines appear a Semitic people, with some non-Semitic habits, institutions, and words. Putting aside the names of their towns, which were probably due to their Canaanite predecessors,[1] we find a number of their personal names also to be Semitic.[2] Their religion seems to have consisted of the thorough Semitic fashion of reverencing a pair of deities, masculine and feminine. Dagon had a fish-goddess by his side, and the names Dagon and Beelzebub are purely Semitic. Nor is this evidence counterbalanced by the fact that the Philistines did not practise circumcision, for they may have abandoned the custom during their western sojourn, as the later Phœnicians did in contact with the Greeks. But even when we have admitted the Semitic features, it is still possible to argue that the Philistines received these from the civilisation which they succeeded and absorbed. This is certain in the case of their towns, and of the names of the giants among them, who belonged to the remains of the Canaanite population.[3] Indeed, with the exception, perhaps, of Abimelech, there is no Philistine name of a Semitic cast of which this may not be true. It is quite possible that neither Delilah nor Obed-edom the Gittite was a pure Philistine.[4] As for language, there is little argument either way; but if, as there is some reason

Racial character of Philistines.

[1] This disposes of part of Stade's argument, *Gesch. des V. Israel*, i. 142.

[2] Abimelech, Delilah, Obed-edom. But see below. Perhaps also Ishbi, Saph, Goliath, Raphah.

Achish, אכיש, son of Maoch, מעוך, king of Gath, 1 Sam. xxvii. 2. Achish, son of Maachah, king of Gath, מעכה 1 Kings ii. 39. W. Max Müller (*Asien u. Eur.*, 389) gives a name Bi-d-ira.

[3] Josh. xi. 21, 22. Cf. xv. 13, 14.

[4] Gath was so near the Israel border, and so often under Israel, that Obed edom may have been a Hebrew, though this is not likely from his name.

to suppose, incoming Israel acquired theirs from the Canaanites, it is not impossible for the Philistines to have done the same.[1] As for religion, if in antiquity the religion of a province was usually adopted by its invaders, and if even Israel fell so frequently under the power of Canaanite worship, as only with difficulty to escape from permanently succumbing to it, how much more likely were the Philistines, who had not the spirit of Israel, to yield to the *manner of the gods of the land*.[2] The case, therefore, is very complex. As to the non-Semitic elements in Philistinism, some maintain that they are Greek, or at least Aryan.[3] Now, it would indeed be interesting if we were sure that in the early Philistines Israel already encountered that Hellenism with which she waged war on the same fields in the days of the Maccabees. But we cannot affirm more than that this was possible; and the above ambiguous results are all that are afforded by the present state of our knowledge of this perplexing people.

Their appearance in Canaan.

The Philistines appear to have come into the Maritime Plain of Syria either shortly before or shortly after Israel left Egypt. In the Tell-el-Amarna Letters from South Palestine, in the beginning of the fourteenth century B.C., they are not mentioned; and in the latter half of that century the monuments of Rameses II. represent the citizens of Askalon with faces that are not Philistine faces.[4] Now, this agrees with the

[1] Nothing can be argued about the speech of the early Philistines, from the fact that in Aramaic times the Philistines, as witnessed by two coins of Ashdod, spoke a dialect of Hebrew.

[2] 2 Kings xvii. 26.

[3] The article in Riehm's *Handwörterbuch* says of the Philistines: 'Sie sind mit Griechischen, bestimmter Karischen, Elementen, stark versetzten Semiten, aus Kreta. In Isa. ix. 11, for Philistines the LXX. have Ἕλληνες.

[4] They are probably Hittite.—Brugsch.

traditions in Genesis, one of which places the Philistine centre still to the south of Gaza,[1] while another states that the Canaanites once held all the coast from Gaza northwards;[2] as well as that of Deuteronomy,[3] that *the Caphtorim* had to *expel the Avim, who dwelt in open villages, as far as Gaza.* This northern advance of the Philistines may have been going on at the very time that the Israelites were invading the Canaanites from the east. But if so, it cannot have been either powerful or ambitious, for of the various accounts in the books of Joshua and Judges of the first Hebrew conquests, none bring the Hebrews even into conflict with the Philistines.[4] Still later, by Deborah's time, the tribe of Dan had touched the sea, and when afterwards they were driven back to the hills, the pressure came not from Philistines, but from Amorites.[5] Very soon

[1] In Gerar—Gen. xx. and xxvi. Gerar can hardly be the Umm-el-Jerâr for which it is generally taken; for this is too far north for the verse in which it occurs to agree with the clause immediately before it, Gen. xx. 1; and the *Onomasticon* puts it twenty-five Roman miles south of Beit-Jibrin.

[2] Gen. x. 19.

[3] ii. 3.

[4] Josh. xi. and xiii.; Judges i., especially verse 18, where, with the LXX. and most authorities, we should insert the word 'not.' Josh. xiii. 2 says expressly, *This is the land that yet remaineth—all the Gelîloth*, or *circuits, of the Philistines.*

[5] Judges v. 17: *Dan abideth in ships.* Judges i. 34: *The Amorites forced the children of Dan into the mountains, for they would not suffer them to come down into the valley, i.e.* of Ajalon, where according to the next verse, the Amorites settled till they were subdued by Ephraim. [I cannot agree with Budde (*Bücher Richter u. Samuel*, p. 17) that Mount Heres=Beth-shemesh, the present 'Ain Shems, in the Vale of Sorek (read *südlich* for *nördlich* in Budde). Mount Heres must be in the Vale of Ajalon, where Ephraim would naturally come, as he would not into Sorek.] The two statements can hardly be reconciled, for if the Amorites succeeded, according to Judges i. 34, in preventing Dan from even coming down into the valley, how could it be said that (Judges v. 17) Dan ever got to the sea, and *remained in ships?* This is just one of the difficulties that meet us almost everywhere in the accounts of Israel's occupation of the land. I have ventured (in opposition to Stade, Budde, and Kittel) to adopt the statement that Dan did reach the sea, for Judges v. 17 belongs to one of the best-assured parts of the Song of Deborah,

afterwards, however, the Philistines, adding to their effective force the tall Canaanites[1] whom they had subdued, and strengthened, perhaps, by the addition of other clans from their earlier seats—for, like Israel, they had several tribes among them[2]—moved north and east with irresistible power. Overflowing from what was especially known as their districts, the Gelîlôth Pelesheth,[3] they seized all the coast to beyond Carmel, and spread inland over Esdraelon. It was during this time of expansion that they also invaded the highlands to the east of them, and began that conflict with Israel which alone has given them fame and a history.

Their contact with Israel.

We cannot have followed this history without being struck by the strange parallel which it affords to the history of Israel—the strange parallel and the stranger difference. Both Philistines and Hebrews were immigrants into the land for whose possession they fought through centuries. Both came up to it from Egypt. Both absorbed the populations they found upon it. Both succeeded to the Canaanite civilisation, and came under the fascination of the Canaanite religion. Each people had a distinctive character of its own, and both were at different periods so victorious that either, humanly speaking, might have swallowed up the other. Indeed, so fully was the Philistine identified with the land that his name has for ever become its name—a

Parallel between the Philistines and Israelites.

and is not to be put aside simply because it conflicts with another statement.

[1] Sons of Anak.

[2] Kaphtorim, Philistines, Kerethim, etc.

[3] One of the few instances of the use of Gelîl, or Gelîlah, apart from Galilee (ch. xx.). It was, of course, a name applied by the foreign Hebrews, and one might be tempted to see a trace of it in the Galilea of the Crusaders, east of Cæsarea, and the modern Jelîl, north-east of Jaffa. See p. 413.

distinction which Israel never reached. Yet Israel survived and the Philistine disappeared. Israel attained to a destiny, equalled in the history of mankind only by Greece and Rome, whereas all the fame of the Philistine lies in having served as a foil to the genius of the Hebrews, and to-day his name against theirs is the symbol of impenetrableness and obscurantism.

What caused this difference between peoples whose earlier fortunes were so similar? *First*, we may answer, their geographical position, and *Second*, the spirit which was in one of them. The same Hand[1] which brought in Israel from the east brought up the Philistine from the south. It planted Israel on a rocky range of mountain, aloof from the paths of the great empires, and outside their envy. It planted the Philistines on an open doorway and a great thoroughfare, amidst the traffic and the war of two continents. They were bent now towards Egypt, now towards Assyria, at a time when youthful Israel was growing straight and free as one of her own forest trees. They were harassed by intrigue and battle, when her choicest spirits had freedom for the observation of the workings of an omnipotent and righteous Providence; and when, at last, they were overwhelmed by the streams of Greek culture which flowed along their coast in the wake of Alexander the Great, she upon her bare heights still stubbornly kept the law of her Lord. Yet, to ascribe this difference of destiny to difference of geographical position were to dignify the mere opportunity with the virtue of the original cause; for it was not Israel's geographical position which prevented her from yielding to the Canaanite religion, or moved her, being still young

[1] See Amos viii. 9.

and rude, to banish from her midst the soothsayers and necromancers, to whom the Philistines were wholly given over.[1] But from the first Israel had within her a spirit, and before her an ideal, of which the Philistines knew nothing, and always her prophets identified the purpose—which they plainly recognised—of her establishment on so isolated and secure a position with the highest ends of righteousness, wisdom, and service to all mankind.

It is outside the purpose of this work to follow in detail the history of the relations of the two peoples, but it may be useful to define the main periods into which that history falls, with their relevant portions of geography.

Relations of Israel and Philistia, I. To B.C. 800.

There was *first* a period of military encounters, and alternate subjugation of the one people by the other. This passed through its heroic stage in the times of Samson, Saul, and David, entered a more peaceful epoch under Solomon, and for the next three centuries of the Hebrew monarchy was distinguished by occasional raids from both sides into the heart of the enemy's country. The chief theatre of the events of this period are the Shephelah hills and the valleys leading up through them upon Judah and Benjamin.[2] At one time the Philistines are at Michmash, on the very citadel of Israel's hill-country, and at another near Jezreel, by its northern entrances.[3] In both of these cases their purpose may have been to extend their supremacy over the trade routes which came up from Egypt and crossed the Jordan ; but it seems as probable that, by occupying Michmash and the Plain of Esdraelon, they sought to separate the

[1] Cf. 1 Sam. xxviii. 3 with Isa. ii. 6.

[2] See next chapter.

[3] 1 Sam. xiii., xxix., and xxxi.

tribes of Israel from one another.[1] Occasionally Philistines penetrated to the neighbourhood of Jerusalem,[2] or the Israelite raids swept up to the gates of Gaza;[3] but neither people ever mastered the other's chief towns.

II. B.C. 800-400.

The *second* period is that of the centuries from the eighth to the fourth before Christ, when the contests of the two nations are stilled before the advance upon Syria of the great world-powers—Egypt, Assyria, Babylon and Persia. Now, instead of a picture of forays and routs up and down the intervening passes, Philistine and Hebrew face to face in fight, we have the gaze of the Hebrew prophets looking down on Philistia from afar, and marking her cities for destruction by the foreign invader. It is, indeed, one of the many signs of the sobriety of the prophets, and of their fidelity to historical fact, that they do not seek to revive within Israel at this time any of her earlier ambitions for the victory of her own arms over her ancient foe. The threats of prophecy against Philistia are, with one exception, threats of destruction from Egypt and Mesopotamia. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Zephaniah, Zechariah, speak of the Philistine cities, not hotly, as of enemies shortly to be met in battle, but pitifully, as victims of the Divine judgment, which lowers over Philistia and Israel alike.[4]

[1] This seems the more likely idea in the case of Michmash, for although there was a trade route from the east of the Jordan by Jericho and Michmash to the coast, which was much used by the Crusaders (see p. 250), a garrison at Michmash could not have kept it open while Saul had his camp at Gilgal, and commanded the Jordan.

[2] 2 Sam. v. 22 ff.

[3] 2 Kings xviii. 8.

[4] Isa. xiv. 29-32; Jer. xlvii.; Zeph. ii.; Zech. ix. The one exception is Isa. xi. 14, where it is said Judah and Ephraim shall swoop upon the shoulder of the Philistine towards the sea This is a passage which some maintain is not Isaiah's. But, as far as our present subject is concerned, there was suffi-

A change of attitude and temper came with the *third* period, from the third century before Christ to the close of the Jewish revolts against Rome, in the third century after Christ. With Alexander's invasion the Philistine coast and cities were opened to Greek influence. There was traffic with Greece through the harbours, such as they were; there were settlements of Greek men in all the cities, Greek institutions arose, the old deities were identified with Greek gods, and, though the ancient Philistine stubbornness persisted it was exercised in the defence of civic independence, according to Greek ideas, and of Greek manners and morals. But it was just against this Hellenism, whether of Syria or of the half-free Philistine cities, that the sacred wars of the Maccabees broke out. The aloofness of the prophetic period was over, and Israel returned to close quarters with her ancient foes. Their battles raged on the same fields; their routs and pursuits up and down the same passes. Did Samson arise in the Vale of Sorek, and David slay Goliath in the Vale of Elah, both of them leading down into Philistia?—then the birthplace of the Maccabees was in the parallel Valley of Ajalon, at Modin, and their exploits within sight of the haunts of their predecessors a thousand years before. So, through the literature of this time, and of the times leading up to it, we miss the wide prophetic view, and in psalms that exult in the subjugation of the Philistines to Israel, and *triumph over Philistia*,[1] we seem to breathe

III. B.C. 300—A.D. 300.

cient historical occasion for it in Isaiah's days, in the expeditions of Uzziah and Hezekiah up to the gates of Gaza.

[1] Psalm lx. (cviii.), lxxxiii., etc. Of course, it is always possible historically that such Psalms are of earlier date, for Hezekiah carried fire and sword into Philistia while Isaiah was alive—a strong reminder to us of how impossible it is to be dogmatic on the date of any Psalm, simply because it reflects the main feeling of the literature of the time to which we assign it.

again the ruder and more military spirit of the times of Samson and of Saul. This hostility and active warfare persisted till the last Jewish revolts under the Roman emperors. Then the Jews gave way, withdrawing into Galilee, and Christianity succeeded to the heritage of the war against Hellenism.

IV. In Christian Times.

The slow conquest of heathenism by the Church forms the *fourth* period of the history of Philistia, from the first to the beginning of the fifth century after Christ. It is typical of the whole early progress of Christianity, and as full of pathos and romance as this was in any other part of the world. In Philistia Christianity rose against a Hellenism proud of its recent victories over the Jews. There were flourishing schools and notable philosophers in every city. The gods, identified with the deities of Greece and Rome, were favoured equally by the common people and by the governing classes. The Marneion, or Temple of Marna, at Gaza was regarded as a stronghold of heathendom only second to the Serapeum at Alexandria.[1] Beside so elaborate a paganism the early Christians of Philistia, though they were organised under many bishops, were a small and feeble folk. Like the Church of Pergamos, they *dwelt by Satan's seat*, and like her, in consequence, they had their martyrs.[2] Next neighbours to the Church of Egypt, they imitated the asceticism of Antony, and avowed the orthodoxy of Athanasius. The deserts of Egypt sent them monks, who, scattered over the plain and the low hills of Shephelah, gradually converted the country people, with a power which the Hellenism of the cities had no means to counteract.[3] It is their caves

[1] Jerome *ad Laetam*, ep. vii., and *Commentary to Isaiah*, c. xvii.

[2] Rev. ii. 13. For martyrs see Eusebius, *H.E.* viii. 13, Sozomen, *passim.*

[3] Jerome, *Life of Hilarion.* Sozomen's *History*, vi. 31.

and the ruins of their cloisters which we come across to-day in the quiet glens of the Shephelah, especially in the neighbourhood of Beit-Jibrin.[1] For a little, Constantine's favour gave them a freer course in the cities, but this was closed by the following hostility of Julian ; and it was not till 402, under the influence of Theodosius, and at the hands of the vigorous Bishop Porphyry of Gaza,[2] that the Cross triumphed, and idolatry was abolished. Then the Marneion was destroyed, almost on the same site on which Samson drew down the Temple of Dagon fifteen hundred years before. But this was only the climax of a process of which the country monks must get the credit. In the same glens where the early peasants of Israel had beaten back the Philistine armies with ox-goads,[3] and David, with his shepherd's sling, had slain the giant, simple monks, with means as primitive, gained the first victories for Christ over as strenuous a paganism.

After this, life in Philistia is almost silent till the Crusades, and after the Crusades till now.

This rapid sketch of the four periods of Philistine history will prepare us both for our review of the great Philistine cities in this chapter, and of the Shephelah in the next. The five Philistine cities we take now from the south northwards.

Gaza may best be described as in most respects the southern counterpart of Damascus. It is a site of abun-

[1] See ch. xi. The labours of these monks were especially numerous in the νόμος of Eleutheropolis : Eusebius.

[2] *Life of Porphyry*, by Marcus the Deacon, in the *Acta Sanctorum*.

[3] The story of Shamgar and his slaughter of 600 Philistines with an ox-goad (Judges iii. 31) is no doubt, as many have suggested, a typical instance of the fact above stated.

dant fertility on the edge of a great desert[1]—a harbour for the wilderness and a market for the nomads; once, as Damascus is still, the rendezvous of a great pilgrimage; and as Damascus was the first great Syrian station across the desert from Assyria, so Gaza is the natural outpost across the desert from Egypt. This, indeed, is to summarise her position and history.

Gaza.

Gaza lies to-day where she lay in the most ancient times, on and around a hill, which rises 100 feet above the plain, at three miles' distance from the sea. Fifteen wells of fresh water burst from the sandy soil, and render possible the broad gardens and large population.[2] The Bedouin from a hundred miles away come into the bazaars for their cloth, weapons, and pottery. In the days when the pilgrimage to Sinai was made rather from Syria than from Egypt, the caravans were organised in Gaza for the desert march.[3] The inhabitants were characterised as 'lovers of pilgrims,' whom, no doubt, like the Damascenes, they found profitable. As from Damascus, so from Gaza great trade-routes travelled in all directions—to Egypt, to South Arabia, and in the times of the Naba-

Gaza and the Desert.

[1] ἐπὶ τῇ ἀρχῇ τῆς ἐρήμου. Arrian, *Anabasis* ii. 26. For Damascus see ch. xxx.

[2] Arrian, *Anab. Alex.* ii. 26, reckons Gaza at twenty stadia from the sea. The hill is not extensive. The gardens spread about it four miles north and south by two and a half east and west. The population is said to be 18,000 at present, and, except when ruined, the town was described by writers of all ages as large, splendid, and opulent. For detailed descriptions see *P.E.F. Mem.* iii.; *Z.D.P.V.* viii., but especially xi., with plan by Gatt, p. 149. In 1483 twice as big as Jerusalem: Felix Fabri (*P.P.T.*), ii. 450.

[3] Rather than at Hebron, even when the pilgrimage was to or from Jerusalem, for the Bedouin still avoid Hebron, but come readily to Gaza: Robinson, *B.R.* i. Cf. Anton. Placen. *Itiner.* (570 A.D.), which describes (ch. xxxiii.) the Gazans as 'homines honestissimi, omni liberalitate decori, amatores peregrinorum.' Antoninus took eighteen or nineteen days on the way to Sinai. Antonius de Cremona says: 'De monte Synay usque ad Gazam fuimus xv. diebus in deserto.' Cf. also Bernhard, de la Brocquerie (1432).

tean kingdom to Petra and Palmyra.[1] Amos curses Gaza for trafficking in slaves with Edom.[2] When the descriptions of Strabo and Pliny reach Gaza, almost the only fact they find relevant is her distance from Elath, on the Gulf of Akaba.[3] From all those eastern depots, on sea and desert, Gaza, by her harbour, in Greek times forwarded the riches of Arabia and India across the Mediterranean, as Acca did by the Palmyra-Damascus route. The Crusaders alone do not appear to have used Gaza for commerce, because this part of Palestine was never so securely in their hands as to permit them to dominate the roads south and east for any distance, and they tapped the eastern trade by the route Moab, Jericho, Jerusalem, Joppa.[4] But through Moslem times the stream has partly followed its old channel. To this day caravans setting out from Gaza meet the Damascus Hajj at Ma'en with pilgrims and supplies.[5] Their common interest in those routes has generally kept the people of Gaza and the Bedouin on good terms. Bates, the Persian who defended Gaza against Alexander the Great, employed Arab mercenaries;[6] in the military history of Judah, Arabians are twice joined with Philistines;[7] the excursions of the Maccabees against the Philistine towns were usually directed against the 'nomads' as well;[8] and, on the eve of her desolation by Alexander Janneus, Gaza was looking wistfully across the

[1] Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* v. 12. Cf. ch. xxix.

[2] Amos i. 6.

[3] Strabo, vi. 20; Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* v. 12, cf. 14.

[4] Rey's *Les Colonies Franques dans le xii. et xiii. siècles*, ch. ix.

[5] Burckhardt's *Travels in Syria*, pp. 436, 658; Doughty's *Arabia Deserta*, I. p. 133, where it is said that caravans also come from Hebron to Ma'en.

[6] Arrian, *Anab.* ii. 26, 27; Quintus Curtius, iv. 6.

[7] In bringing tribute to Jehoshaphat, 2 Chron. xvii. 11, and in invading Jehoram, 2 Chron. xxi. 16.

[8] 1 Maccabees.

desert for King Aretas, the Arabian, to come to her help.[1] In the Moslem invasion Gaza was one of the first points in Syria which Abu Bekr's soldiers struck,[2] and the Byzantine army was defeated in the suburbs. After that the Mohammedans called Gaza Dehliz el Moulk, 'the Threshold of the Kingdom.'

But Gaza has even closer relations with Egypt. The eight days' march across the sands from the Delta requires that if an army come up that way into Syria, Gaza, being their first relief from the desert, should be in friendly hands. Hence the continual efforts of Egypt to hold the town. Alike under the Pharaohs of the sixteenth to the fourteenth centuries, and the Ptolemies of the third and second, we find Gaza occupied, or bitterly fought for, by Egyptian troops.[3] Alexander, invading Egypt, and Napoleon, invading Syria, had both to capture her. Napoleon has emphasised the indispensableness of Gaza, whether in the invasion or the defence of the Nile Valley.[4] Gaza is the outpost of Africa, the door of Asia.

Gaza and Egypt.

Gaza never lay within the territories of early Israel,[5]

[1] Josephus xiii. *Antt.* xiii. 3.

[2] By the most southerly of the three brigades—that of Amr Ibn el Assi—Gaza seems to have been taken in 634.

[3] *The Annals of Thothmes III.; The Tell-el-Amarna Letters* of the fifteenth century; the records of Ramses' conquests in the fourteenth. Sayce supposes the Philistines were planted by the Egyptians in Gaza and her sister cities as outposts of Egypt (*Races of the O.T.*, p. 54), yet Egypt is always represented as hostile to them, Müller, *Asien u. Europa*, 388 ff. Cf. Jer. xlvii. From 323, when Ptolemy Lagos took it (Diod. Sic. xix. 59), Gaza frequently passed from the Ptolemies to the Antiochi, and back again, till 198 B.C. (Polybius, v.), when it fell to Antiochus the Great, and remained part of the Syrian kingdom for a century. But see Additional Notes on p. 198.

[4] *Op. cit.* II. ch. vii.

[5] A later addition to Josh. xv., viz. vv. 45-47, sets Gaza within the ideal borders of Judah; but this has no confirmation, and, indeed, is contradicted by the true reading of Judges i. 18, where a *not* should be inserted from the LXX. The Gaza of 1 Chron. vii. 28 is another Gaza, near Shechem.

though Israel's authority, as in Solomon's time,[1] and temporary conquests, as in Hezekiah's,[2] might extend to her gates; and this is to be explained by the prestige which Egypt, standing immediately behind, cast upon her. Under the Maccabees, as we have seen, Jewish armies carried fire and sword across Philistia. Ekron and Ashdod were taken, Askalon came to terms, and, after Jonathan had burnt her suburbs, Gaza was forced to buy him off.[3] It was not till 96 B.C. that Jews actually crossed her walls, but in that year the pent-up hatred of centuries burst in devastation upon her. Alexander Janneus, taking advantage of the withdrawal from Syria of the Egyptian troops, invested Gaza. After a year's siege, in which the whole oasis was laid waste, the town itself was captured by treachery, its buildings burned, and its people put to the sword.[4] Gaza, to use the word that is echoed of her by one writer after another for the next century, lay desert.[5] In 62, Pompey took Gaza—now called a maritime city, like Joppa—from the Jews, and made it a free city.[6] In 57, Gabinius rebuilt it,[7] certainly on a new site, and possibly close to its harbour, which all through the Greek period had been growing in importance. In 30, Gaza, still called 'a maritime city,' was granted by Cæsar to Herod,[8] but at the latter's death, being Greek, as

Gaza and Israel.

[1] 1 Kings iv. 24. Azza, or rather 'Azza, is the more correct spelling of Gaza.

[2] 2 Kings xviii. 8.

[3] Josephus xiii. *Antt.* xv. 5; 1 Macc. xi. 60. In xiii. 4, read Gazara for Gaza.

[4] Josephus xiii. *Antt.* xiii. 3.

[5] πολὺν χρόνον ἐρήμους, Josephus xiv. *Antt.* v. 3; μένουσα ἔρημος, Strabo xvi. 2. 30; and ἡ ἔρημος Γάζα, the anonymous Greek geographer in Hudson's *Geographiæ veter. script. Græci Minores*, iv. p. 39.

[6] Josephus xiv. *Antt.* v. 3.

[7] Josephus xiv. *Antt.* iv. 4; i. *Wars*, vii. 7. In both of these passages Gaza is separated from the inland towns, and called Maritime.

[8] Josephus xv. *Antt.* vii. 3.

Josephus says, it was again taken from the Jews, and added to the Imperial Province of Syria.[1] 'New' Gaza flourished exceedingly at this time, but the Old or Desert Gaza was not forgotten, probably not even wholly abandoned, for the trunk-road to Egypt still travelled past it. In the Book of Acts, in the directions given to Philip to meet the Ethiopian eunuch, this is accurately noted: *Arise, and go toward the south, unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem to Gaza; this is desert.*[2] Most authorities connect the adjective, not with Gaza, but with *the way*; yet no possible route from Jerusalem to Gaza could be called desert, and this being so, and several writers of the period immediately preceding having used the phrase of the town itself, it seems that we are not only encouraged, but shut up, to the same reference here. If New Gaza, as is probable, lay at this time upon the coast, then we know that the road the Ethiopian travelled did not take that direction, and in describing the road it was natural to mention the old site—Desert, not necessarily in reality, but still in name—which was always a station upon it. That Philip was found immediately after at Ashdod suggests that the meeting and the baptism took place on the Philistine Plain, and not among the hills of Judæa, where tradition has placed them. But that would mean the neighbourhood of Gaza, and an additional reason for mentioning the town.[3]

Gaza which is Desert.

[1] Josephus xvii. *Antt.* xi. 4; ii. *Wars*, vi. 3. Also the earliest imperial coins of Gaza date from a year or two after this (De Saulcy, *Numismatique de la Terre Sainte*, p. 213).

[2] Acts viii. 26.

[3] My only difficulty in coming to this conclusion is that so many authorities are against it; but it seems to me so impossible to describe any route from Jerusalem to Gaza as desert—whether it be that by Beit-Jibrin, which Robinson (*B.R.* ii.; *Phys. Geog.* 108, 109) selects, or the longer one by Hebron, which Räumer and Guérin prefer (*Judée*, ii. p. 204), Guérin sup-

The subsequent history of Gaza is identified, as we have seen, with the struggle of Christianity against heathendom In the second and third centuries Gaza became a prosperous centre of Greek commerce and culture. Her schools were good, but her temples were famous, circling round the Marneion, or House

Gaza and Christianity.

porting his choice by the unfounded remark that fewer people took this route, and therefore it might be distinguished as ἔρημος from the other—that I feel we are shut up to taking ἔρημος as referring to Gaza. Now, had Acts viii. been a document of the first century B.C., there could have been no doubt about the reference, for Gaza was then left 'desert,' as explicitly stated by Josephus xiv. *Antt.* iv. 4, and remained desert, as witnessed by Strabo xvi. 2. 30, and by the Anonymous Geographical Fragment in *Geogr. Græc. Minores*, ed. Hudson, iv. p. 39. This Fragment gives a list of towns from south to north, and says that after Rinocoloura, ἡ νεά Γάζα κεῖται, πόλις οὖσα καὶ αὐτή, εἶθ' ἡ ἔρημος Γάζα, εἶτα ἡ Ἀσκάλον πόλις. Diodorus Siculus (xix. 80) had also spoken of an Old Gaza (ἡ παλαιὰ Γάζα) as the town where Ptolemy Lagos, in 312, defeated Demetrius Poliorcetes, as if to distinguish it from the New Gaza (which he does not name) of his (Diodorus') own time. Schürer, *Hist.* Div. II. vol. ii. 71, holds that the New Gaza was not the port, but another town lying inland, and, according to the Anonymous Fragment, to the south of Old Gaza ; but there is no evidence of this. The New Gaza of the Fragment might as well be a coast town as Askalon ; and Josephus' statement that the Gaza Pompey enfranchised in 62 was not an inland city, like Ashdod and Jamnia, but a maritime, like Joppa and Dora (Josephus xiv. *Antt.* iv. 4 ; cf. Josephus xv. *Antt.* vii. 3, where again it is 'maritime,' like Joppa) seems to make it probable that the Gaza which Gabinius rebuilt (*ib.* v. 3) was on the coast. If this be so, then it lay off the road to Egypt, which still passed by the desert Gaza. It is not necessary to suppose that this latter was absolutely deserted even in Philip's time. The fertile site and neighbourhood of the great road would attract people back ; but, even though it were largely like its old self again, the name Ἔρημος might stick to it. Gaza is said to have been demolished by the Jewish revolt of 66 A.D. (ii. *Wars*, xvii. 1), and if this had been true, we might have had a new reason why the author of Acts viii. added the gloss 'this is desert' to his description of Gaza ; but, as Schürer remarks, we have coins of the years immediately following, which testify to the city's continued prosperity (cf. De Saulcy, *Num. de la T.S.*, p. 214). However this may be, the process of the return of the city to its old site, which may have begun, as I say, before Philip's time, was completed in the following centuries, and the reason of it is clear. The land trade was always likely to prevail over the sea trade on such a coast, and the old site had, besides the road, its fertility and fifteen wells. In 363 A.D. the Gazans

of the city's god, Marna. Marna, Lord or our Lord,[1] was the Baal of Gaza, Lord of Heaven and sun and rain, whom it was easy to identify with Zeus. A statue, discovered a short time since at Tell-el-'Ajjul, is supposed to be the image of Marna, and it bears resemblance to the Greek face of the Father of gods and men.[2] Around him were Zeus Nikephorus, Apollo, Aphrodite, Tyche, Proserpina, Hecate—nearly the whole Syrian pantheon. Truly the Church of Gaza dwelt, like the Church of Pergamos, where Satan's seat is : and like her she had her many martyrs.[3] Constantine, finding the inland Gaza's authorities obdurately pagan, gave a separate constitution to the sea-town, or Maiumas, which he entitled Constantia, and there was a bishop of this besides the Bishop of Gaza. But Julian took these privileges away. For generations the rival cries 'Marna,' 'Jesus,' rent the streets and circuses. How the Church in 402 finally won the political victory under Theodosius and her famous Bishop Porphyry we have already seen.[4] After this the schools of Gaza in philosophy and rhetoric grew more and more distinguished. Students, it is said, left Athens to learn the Attic style in Philistia, and even Persia borrowed her teachers.[5] We get a glimpse of the citizens in the close of the sixth century, 'very honest, beautiful with all liberality, lovers of pilgrims.'[6] But in 635 Gaza became Moslem, and, for obvious reasons, gradually declined to the rank of a respectable

believed themselves to be on the same site as Old Gaza, and the temples destroyed in 402, and the churches built in their stead, occupied the site of the city to-day which agrees with the description of the site of Gaza taken by Alexander the Great (Arrian, *Anab.* ii. 26). Jerome's statement in the *Onomasticon* is too vague to be taken into account.

[1] Cf. Μαρὰν ἀθά of 1 Cor. xvi. 22.
[2] *P.E.F.Q.*, 1882.
[3] Euseb. *H.E.* and Sozomen *passim*.
[4] P. 180 f.
[5] For details see Stark, pp. 631-645.
[6] See p. 182 n. 3.

station of traffic. Even with the Crusaders her military importance did not revive. They found her almost deserted, and they took no trouble to fortify her. Their chief fortress in Philistia was Askalon, and their southern outpost was Daroma, now Deir-el-Belat, on the Wady, three hours south of Gaza.

Near Gaza there was a town, Anthedon,[1] which occurs in Josephus, and is mentioned by Pliny, Ptolemy, and Sozomen. Alexander Janneus took it when he took Gaza: it was rebuilt and enfranchised under the Romans, and in Christian times had a bishop.[2] Near this town, then called Tadun, the Moslems defeated the Byzantines in 635. The site was lost till the other day, when Herr Gatt heard the name Teda given by a native to some ruins twenty-five minutes north of Gaza harbour, and near the sea.[3] Anthedon must have been virtually a suburb of Gaza.

We take next Askalon, or as the Hebrews called it, 'Ashkelon. The site, which to-day bears the name,[4] has been already described: it is a rocky amphitheatre in the low bank of the coast, and filled by Crusading ruins.[5] Since the fortifications, as at Cæsarea, are bound together by pillars of Herod's time, it is certain that the Askalon, which Herod embellished,[6] stood here

Askalon.

[1] Josephus xiii. *Antt.* xiii. 3; xv. 4; i. *Wars*, iv. 2; Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* v. 14; Ptol., *Geogr.* v. 16.
[2] *Acta Conciliorum.*

[3] This proves that Pliny was wrong in putting Anthedon inland from Gaza, and Ptolemy right in calling it a coast town. For an account of Gatt's discovery, see *Z.D.P.V.* vii. 5 ff.; cf. 140, 141. It contains the following beautiful summary of tradition. After asking the name of the place and hearing it was Teda, Gatt said to his informant: 'Whence knowest thou that?' 'From those who have lived before me have I heard it. Is it not with you as with us—some are born and others die, and the old tell the young what they know?'

[4] In Arabic 'Askalân, with initial 'Ayin instead of Aleph.

[5] See description by Guthe, with plan by Schick, *Z.D.P.V.* ii. 164 ff.

[6] i. *Wars* xxi. 11.

also, though extending farther inland : and there is no hint in Josephus that Herod's Askalon occupied any other site than that of the old Philistine city. If this be so, then of all the Philistine Pentapolis, Askalon was the only one which lay immediately on the sea.[1] This fact, combined with distance from the trunk-road on which Gaza, Ashdod, and Ekron stand, is perhaps the explanation of a certain singularity in Askalon's history, when compared with that of her sisters. The town has no natural strength, but is very well watered.

Askalon in the Crusades.

Take her in her period of greatest fame. During the Crusades Askalon combined within herself the significance of all the fortresses of Philistia, and proved the key to south-west Palestine. To the Arabs she was the 'Bride of Syria,' 'Syria's Summit.'[2] The

[1] Doubt upon this point has arisen solely from these facts, that in the Acts of the Council of Constantinople, 536, there are mentioned both a Bishop of Askalon and a Bishop of the Port or Maiumas of Askalon, and that Antoninus Placentinus (c. 33), A.D. 570, and Benjamin of Tudela mention two Ascalons from which Pusey drew the conclusion that the Philistine city lay inland (*P.E.F.Q.*, 1874). These data are important, but cannot counterbalance the positive asseitions of Josephus that Herod's Askalon, which was the Crusader's Ascalon on the coast, was an ancient city (iii. *Wars*, ii. 1), and 520 stadia from Jerusalem, too great a distance for any but a coast town. Josephus nowhere describes Askalon as maritime (in the passage just quoted he says it was walled about), unless in i. *Wars*, xxi. 11, the clause which describes the Laodiceans as dwelling on the sea-shore covers also the inhabitants of Askalon in the next clause. It is possible that ancient Askalon spread far inland : the hollow by the sea is very small, the Crusading town there was little more than a fortress, and ancient ruins, of what must have been large edifices, lie far inland (cf. Guérin, *Judée* ii. 134.) The harbour town may have been definitely separated from the town behind. Conder's suggestion that a Khurbet Askalon in the Shephelah may be the Askalon of the Acts of the Council of Constantinople, has nothing to support it but the name (*P.E.F. Mem.*). Guérin's idea that the inhabitants tried to create a better port than that at their feet, either north or south, may be the solution of the difficulty. He found no traces of such ; but it is noteworthy that the next stream to the south bears the name among others of the Nahr 'Askulan.

[2] Le Strange, *Palestine under the Moslems.*

Egyptians held her long after the Crusaders were settled in Jerusalem. She faced the Christian outposts at Ramleh, resisted many assaults, and discharged two expeditions up to the walls of Jerusalem, before she was captured by Baldwin III. in 1154. The scene of two more battles Askalon was retaken by Saladin in 1187, and dismantled five years later when he retired upon Jerusalem. The Christians tried to rebuild the fortress, but the truce came, one of the articles of which was that the town should be fortified by neither party, and it was finally demolished by Bibars in 1270. This fierce contest and jealousy between powers occupying respectively Syria and Egypt, the plains and the hills, amply certify the strategical importance of the old Philistine site. That through all the Crusades, Askalon should have enjoyed chief importance, while Gaza had hardly any is certainly due to the situation on the coast. Both Moslems and Christians had fleets which from time to time supplied and supported Askalon from the sea.

Askalon in the History of Israel.

It may have been this same touch with the sea which proved Askalon's value to its ancient masters, especially if it be here that the Philistines were reinforced by direct immigration from Crete.[1] Jeremiah connects it with the sea-shore.[2] In David's lamentation over Saul, it is not Gath and Gaza, but Gath and Ashkelon which are taken as two typical Philistine cities. *Publish it not in the streets of Ashkelon*: it may be that these were bazaars;[3] and there is a sound of trade, a clinking of

[1] Hence the Cherethim, but see p. 169 ff. As we have seen, Askalon was a fortress in Ramses II.'s time, before the Philistines came: taken by Ramses II. from the Hittites, cf. Brugsch, *Geogr. Inschr. altaegyptischer Denkmäler* ii.

[2] xlvii. 7.

[3] 2 Sam. i. 20, cf. 2 Kings xx. 34.

shekels, about the city's very name.[1] Askalon was always opulent and spacious.[2] The Assyrian flood covered all things, and Askalon suffered from it as much as her neighbours.[3] But in the times of the Maccabees she recovered her distinction. She was not so bitter to Judaism as the other Hellenic towns, and so escaped their misfortunes at the hands of Jonathan.[4] When Alexander Janneus devastated Gaza, Askalon kept her peace with that excitable savage. She was the first in Philistia to secure the protection of Rome, and enjoyed her freedom earlier and more continuously than the rest. Through Roman and Byzantine times she was a centre of Hellenic culture, producing even more grammarians and philosophers than her neighbours.[5]

Ashdod.

If Askalon takes her name from trade, Ashdod, like Gaza, takes hers from her military strength.[6] Her citadel was probably the low hill, beside the present village. It was well watered, and commanded the mouth of the most broad and fertile wady in Philistia. It served, also, as the half-way station on the great road between Gaza and Joppa, and, as we have seen, the inland branch broke off here for Ekron and Ramleh. The ruins of a great khan have outlived those of the fortresses from which the city took her name. Ashdod also, like her sisters, had suffered her varying fortunes in the war with Israel, and like them suffered for her position in

[1] Ashkelôn, from *shakal*, to weigh, or to pay. Hence shekel or shekel.

[2] For Herod's time, cf. Josephus iii. *Wars* ii. 1, etc.; Under the Moslems, Le Strange, *op. cit.*

[3] Cf. *Conquests of Sargon and Sennacherib*: *Records of the Past.*

[4] 1 Macc. x. 86; xi. 60.

[5] *P.E.F.Q.*, 1888, 22-23, describes two statues found at Askalon. Reinach (*Revue des Etudes Juives*, 1888) ascribes them to the first century B.C. They are Victories.

[6] 1 Sam. iv.; 2 Chron. xxvi. 8.

the way between Assyria and Egypt. Sargon besieged and took her, as related in Isaiah;[1] Sennacherib besieged and took her,[2] but her most wonderful siege, which Herodotus calls the longest in history, was that for twenty-two years by Psammetichus.[3] Judas Maccabeus cleared Ashdod of idols in 163, and in 148 Jonathan and Simon burnt her temple of Dagon.[4] But, like Askalon, Ashdod was now thoroughly Greek, and was enfranchised by Pompey.

Ekron.

Ekron, the modern 'Akir, as Robinson discovered, won its place in the league by possession of an oracle of Baal-zebub, or Baal of the Flies,[5] and by a site on the northern frontier of Philistia, in the Vale of Sorek, where a pass breaks through the low hills to Ramleh. That is to say, like so many more ancient cities, Ekron had the double fortune of a sanctuary and a market on a good trade route. Ekron was nearer the territory of Israel than the other Philistine towns, and from this certain consequences flowed. It was from Ekron that the ark was returned to Israel, by the level road up the Sorek valley to Beth-shemesh, not twelve miles away. Amos uses a phrase of Ekron as if she were more within reach than her sister towns:[6] she was ceded to the Maccabees by the Syrians;[7] and, after the destruction of Jerusalem, the Jews readily came to her, for, like Lydda, she was in a valley that led down from Jerusalem. To-day the Joppa-Jerusalem railway travels past her. With Ekron we may take a town that stood very near in rank to the first Philistine five—Jabneh, or Jabneel,[8] with a harbour at the mouth of the

[1] Isa. xx.
[2] 1 *Rec. of Past.* v.
[3] Herod. ii. 157.
[4] 1 Macc. v. 68; x. 83, 84.
[5] 2 Kings i. 2.
[6] Amos i. 8.
[7] 1 Macc. x. 89.
[8] That is, God buildeth, Josh. xv. 11.

Rubin, famous in the history of the Jews for their frequent capture of it,[1] and for the settlement there of the Jewish Sanhedrim and a school of Rabbinic theology after the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus. Yebna, as the town is now called, lies in a fertility of field and grove that helps us to understand the repute of the district for populousness.[2] The ruins are those of churches built by the Crusaders, who called the place by a corruption of its full name, reversing *l* and *n* as usual, Ibelin for Jabniel.

Gath.

Now, where is Gath? Gath, the city of giants, died out with the giants. That we have to-day no certain knowledge of her site is due to the city's early and absolute disappearance. Amos, about 750 B.C., points to her recent destruction by Assyria as a warning that Samaria must now follow. Before this time, Gath has invariably been mentioned in the list of Philistine cities, and very frequently in the account of the wars between them and Israel. But, after this time, the names of the other four cities are given without Gath—by Amos himself, by Jeremiah, by Zephaniah, and in the Book of Zechariah[3]—and Gath does not again appear in either the Old Testament,[4] or the Books of the Maccabees, or those parts of Josephus which treat of centuries subsequent to the eighth. This can only mean that Gath, both place and name, was totally destroyed about 750 B.C.; and renders valueless all statements as to the city's site which are based on evidence subsequent to that date—as,

[1] 1 Macc. v. 58.

[2] Strabo, vii. 18. 2. Philo in his account of his embassy to Caligula.

[3] Amos i. 6-8; Jer. xlvii.; Zeph. ii. 2-7; Zech. ix. 5-7.

[4] Micah i. 10: *Tell it not in Gath* is hardly an exception, for the expression is proverbial.

for instance, that of the *Onomasticon*, on which so much stress has been laid by recent writers on this question,[1] or that of the Crusaders, who identified Gath with the site of Jabneh.[2]

When we turn to the various appearances of Gath in history, before the time of Amos, what they tell us about the site is this: Gath lay inland, on the borders of Hebrew territory, and probably in the north of Philistia. When the ark was taken from Ashdod, it was *brought about*, that is *inland*, again to Gath.[3] Gath was the Philistine city most frequently taken by the Israelites, and, indeed, was considered along with Ekron as having originally belonged to Israel:[4] after taking Gath, Hazael *set his face to go up to Jerusalem*.[5] All this implies an inland position, and hence nearly all writers have sought Gath among the hills of the Shephelah or at their junction with the plain—at the south-east angle of the plain,[6] at Kefr Dikkerin,[7] at Deir Dubban,[8] and at Beit-Jibrin, or 'home of big men.' The only argument for so southerly a position is Gath's

[1] *Onomasticon*, art. Γέθ, 'and it is even now a village as you go from Eleutheropolis (Beit-Jibrin) to Diospolis (Lydda), about the fifth milestone from Eleutheropolis.' Robinson, Conder, Guérin, all make much of this valueless tradition.

[2] Will. of Tyre, xv. 24; Fel. Fab. ii. 425.

[3] 1 Sam. v. 8.

[4] Gath was taken under Samuel (1 Sam. vii. 14), and is then described as originally Israelite. Taken also by David, according to 1 Chron. xviii. 1; but this is perhaps due to reading (rightly or wrongly) the parallel text, 1 Sam. vii. 14: Metheg Ha Ammah, *bridle of the mother-city*, as if it were Gath Ha Ammah, *Gath the metropolis*. Taken also by Uzziah (2 Chron. xxvi. 6), this must have been early in his long reign. But the statement, in 2 Chron. xi. 5-8, that Gath was among the cities rebuilt by Rehoboam may, if Gath be the true reading (Josephus viii. *Antt.* x. 1 substitutes Ipa or Ipan), mean, from the other towns mentioned, another Gath, near Beit-Jibrin.

[5] 2 Kings xii. 7.

[6] Trelawney Saunders, *Introduction to Survey*, etc.

[7] Guérin, *Judée*.

[8] Robinson.

connection with Ziklag in the story of David and Achish,[1] and this is scarcely conclusive. On the other hand, Gath is mentioned between Askalon and Ekron,[2] several times with Ekron, and especially in the pursuit of the Philistines from the Vale of Elah.[3] In a raid of Uzziah, Gath is coupled with Jamnia and Ashdod.[4] None of this prevents us from fixing on a site much favoured by modern writers, Tell-es-Sâfiyeh, which commands the entrance to the Vale of Elah and looks across Philistia to the sea. Steep limestone scarps rise boldly from the plain to a broad plateau, still known by the natives as the Çastle. During the Crusades, King Fulke fortified it, it was destroyed by Saladin, and is said to have been restored by Richard. They called it Blanchegarde, from its white frontlet. It is altogether too important a site to have been neglected by either Israel or the Philistines, and this lends the argument in its favour some weight. But it is not enough for proof. Tell-es-Sâfiyeh may have been Libnah, the White,[5] or the Mizpeh of the Shephelah.[6] Gath has also been placed at Beit-Jibrin, the 'home of big men,' both because this might well have served as a by-name for the city of the giants,[7] and is in the neighbourhood of Mareshah,[8] and because Beit-Jibrin has not been identified with any other great town of antiquity. But Beit-Jibrin is too far south, and does not lie on the line of the rout of the Philistines after the battle of Shocoh.[9] We must look farther north and towards Ekron. The first Book of Chronicles mentions a Gath convenient to Ajalon and the hills of Ephraim,[10] but

[1] 1 Sam. xxvii. 2-6.
[2] 1 Sam. v. 8.
[3] *Ibid.* xvii. 52.
[4] 2 Chron. xxvi. 6.
[5] Josh. x. 29, 31 f.; 2 Kings viii. 22, etc.
[6] Josh. xv. 38.
[7] 2 Sam. xxi. 22.
[8] Cf. Moresheth-gath, Mic. i. 14.
[9] 1 Sam. xvii. 52.
[10] 1 Chron. vii. 21 : viii. 13.

this may be Gath-rimmon, which lay towards Joppa. The case is made more difficult by the fact that Gath is a generic name, meaning 'winepress,' and was applied, as we might have expected, to several villages, usually with another name attached.[1] Remarkably enough, like their great namesake, they have all disappeared, and in that land of the vine almost no site called after the winepress has held its name.

This, then,—that Gath lay inland, on the borders of Israel, probably near to Ekron, and perhaps in the mouth of a pass leading up to Jerusalem,—is all we know of the town which was once so famous, and which wholly vanished 2500 years ago.[2] Gath perished with its giant race.

FURTHER NOTE ON THE ORIGIN OF THE PHILISTINES.

Since this chapter was in the printer's hands, I have seen the passages on the Philistines in W. Max Müller's *Asien u. Europa nach den alt-ägyptischen Denkmälern* (Leipzig, 1893). His statements on pp. 361, 387 ff., amount to this. Among the pirates from Asia Minor whom Ramses III. (*cir.* 1200) attacked were Pu-ra-sa-ti, 'from the midst of the sea,' Danona, Ta-k-ka-ra, etc., with European features and some of the costume of Asia Minor. They may have been Ancient-Lycian tribes from the east of the Aegean (p. 388); the theory is not impossible that they were pre-Hellenic inhabitants of the Greek Isles, perhaps the Ἐτεόκρητες of Od. xix. 176, thrown into movement by the Greek advance westward (Danona and Ta-k-ka-ra, perhaps Δάναοι

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[1] Cf. Gath-ha-hepher, the birthplace of Jonah, in Galilee, Gath-rimmon near Joppa: Gath-rimmon in Eastern Manasseh, Joshua xxi. 25.

[2] For Gath, in the Egyptian records, see 2 *R.P.* v. 48, Nos. 63 and 70; ii. 64, 65. The Assyrian lists mention a Gûnti or Guntu near Ashdod, which some have identified as Gath. Guntu may be the Egyptian Ka-na-ti given in Thothmes' list (Müller, *Asien u. Europa*, etc., 161). Müller (*Ib.* p. 159 and p. 393) suggests Kn-tu of Shishank's list as one of the many Gaths of Palestine.

and Τεύκροι??). The Pu-ra-sa-ti are the chief tribe ; they are the Philistines. In 1200 Ramses III. represents them as unsettled. The Papyrus Golenischeff describes the other tribe Ta-k-ka-ra as settled in Dor by 1050. The Philistine invasion of the Maritime Plain from Gaza to Carmel, mentioned in Deut. ii. 23, Müller dates from a little before this. He supposes the sudden decline of their power in David's reign to be due to an invasion of the Maritime Plain by Egypt. Shishank's list of conquests (*circa* 980 B.C.) excludes the Philistine cities as if already Egyptian.

W. Max Müller argues against Ebers' theory that Kaphtor is the Kaft-vere = Greater Phoenicia = the Delta, denying that Kft is Phoenicia. He takes Kfte or Kfto as the name of Western Asia Minor, and holds that the assonance with Kaphtor is more than accidental, though the *r* in the latter is not explainable.

Additional Notes to Second Edition (October 1894).—In a review of the first edition in the *Academy* Prof. Sayce says, 'Prof. Smith is fully justified in rejecting my view that the Philistines were a sort of Egyptian outpost' (see p. 184, n. 2). 'The fact that Rameses III. claims to have captured Gaza seems to show that it was hostile to Egypt after its occupation by the Philistine invaders. . . . I must also withdraw my acceptance of the etymology proposed by Prof. Ebers for the name of Caphtor' (cf. p. 170, n. 3). 'My discovery of the hieroglyphic form of the name at Kom Ombo last winter proves that it cannot be a compound of Kaft and the Egyptian *ur*, "great," whatever else it may be. But the hieroglyphic spelling equally shows that Dr. W. Max Müller is incorrect in making it another form of Kaft. Nor can he be right in making Kaft a part of Asia Minor, in spite of the ingenuity of the arguments by which the opinion is supported. The Decree of Kanopos states categorically that Kaft was Phœnicia, and the Egyptian scribes of the Ptolemaic era were more likely to have known the meaning of the name than a German scholar of to-day.'

Additional Note to p. 182, note 3.—Felix Fabri (1483), ii. 93. In Felix Fabri Gaza is always spelt Gazara.

Additional Note to p. 183, n. 3.—Cf. Marciani. Her. *Peripl. Maris Exterior.* (Müller, *Geog. Græci Min.* i. p. 522.) 'Gaza distant from the head of the Ælanitic Gulf 1260 stadia.'

Additional Note to p. 184, note 5.—Mr. G. Buchanan Gray points out that the LXX. reading of Judges i. 18 cannot be derived from the Hebrew text ; it was easy for LXX. to slip in a 'not.'

CHAPTER X

THE SHEPHELAH



For this Chapter consult Maps I. and IV.

THE SHEPHELAH

OVER the Philistine Plain, as you come up from the coast, you see a sloping moorland break into scalps and ridges of rock, and over these a loose gathering of chalk and limestone hills, round, bare and featureless, but with an occasional bastion flung well out in front of them. This is the so-called Shephelah—a famous theatre of the history of Palestine—the debatable ground between Israel and the Philistines, between the Maccabees and the Syrians, between Saladin and the Crusaders.

The name Shephelah means *low* or *lowland*.[1] The Septuagint mostly renders it by *plain*,[2] and even in very recent works[3] it has been applied to the Plain of Philistia. But the towns assigned by the Old Testament to the Shephelah

[1] A feminine form from the verb in the well-known passage, *every mountain shall be made low*. It occurs with a like meaning in Arabic, and has been suggested as the same root as we find in *Seville* (Gesenius, *Thesaurus*, *sub voce*).

[2] τὸ πεδίον or ἡ πεδινή.

[3] Stanley, *Sin. Pal.*, Kittel, *Gesch.* i. 14, Sieg. Stade, *Wörterbuch*, where Shephelah = Küstenebene. Stade, *Gesch.* i. 157, commits the opposite error of calling the Shephelah the 'westliche Abdachung,' as the Negeb is the 'südliche Abdachung' of the Judæan mountain range. This is to recognise correctly the distinction of the Shephelah from the Maritime Plain; but it is to overlook the great valley between it and the Judæan range, which prevents it from being the mere slope or 'glacis' of the latter. Knobel and Dillmann, on Josh. xv. 33, are more correct, but still fail to appreciate the break between the Judæan range and the hills of the Shephelah. On this see p. 205

are all of them situated in the low hills and not on the plain.[1] The Philistines are said to have made a raid on the cities of the Shephelah, which, therefore, must have stood outside their own territory, and indeed did so;[2] and in another passage[3] the time is recalled when the Jews *inhabited the Shephelah*, yet it is well known they never inhabited the Maritime Plain. In the First Book of the Maccabees, too, I notice that the town of Adida is described in one passage as 'in the Shephelah,' and in another as 'over against the Plain;'[4] while in the Talmud the Shephelah is expressly distinguished from the Plain, Lydda, at the base of the Low Hills, being marked as the point of division.[5] We conclude, therefore, that though the name may originally have been used to include

The Shephelah =The Low Hills.

[1] Joshua xv. 33, 2 Chronicles xxviii. 18. Ajalon in its vale, and Gimzo to the west of it; Zorah, Eshtaol and Beth-shemesh in the Vale of Sorek; Gederah to the north, and En-gannim, Zanoah, and Jarmuth within three miles to the south of Sorek: Adullam and Shocoh up the Vale of Elah (W. es Sunt): Tappuah in the W. el 'Afranj; Mareshah, Lachish, and Eglon to the south-west of Beit-Jibrin. The others given have not been properly identified. Vv. 45-47 of Joshua xv., which give Philistine towns in the Plain, are probably a later addition. Eusebius describes the Shephelah as all the low country (πεδινή) lying about Eleutheropolis (Beit-Jibrin) to the north and the west. It is about Beit-Jibrin that Clermont Ganneau and Conder claim to have re-discovered the name, in its Arabic form, Sifla (*Tent Work*, 277).

[2] 2 Chronicles xxviii. 18; cf. Obad. 19.

[3] Zechariah vii. 7.

[4] 1 Macc. xii. 38, xiii. 13. *ἐν τῇ Σεφηλᾷ* and *κατὰ πρόσωπον τοῦ πεδίου*. Hadid was a town of Benjamin, Ezra ii. 33. It occurs in the lists of Thothmes III. as Hadita ii. *R.P.* 48.

[5] Talmud, *Jer. Shebiith* ix. 2. The passage runs: ההר שפלה והעמק ביהודה. 'In Judah there are mountain, Shephelah, and valley land,' or 'plain.' And a note to the Mishna on the country from Beth-horon to the sea runs: אמר ר יהונן עוד היא יש בה הר ושפלה ועמק מבית חורון ועד אמאום הר מאמאום ועד לוד שפלה מלוד ועד הים עמק, which is: 'R. Johanan said also, In that region there are Mountain, Shephelah, and Plain. From Beth-horon to Emmaus is Mountain. from Emmaus to Lydda is Shephelah, from Lydda to the sea is Plain.'

the Maritime Plain,[1] and this wider use may have been occasionally revived, yet the Shephelah proper was the region of low hills between that plain and the high Central Range.[2] The Shephelah would thus be equivalent to our 'downs,' low hills as distinguished from high, did it not also include the great amount of flat valley land, which is as characteristic of this broken region as the subdued elevation of its hills. The name has been more fitly compared to the Scottish 'Lowlands,' which likewise are not entirely plain, but have their groups and ranges of hills.

Only those south of Ajalon.

How far north did the Shephelah run? From the sea, and across the Plain, low hills are seen buttressing the Central Range all the way along. Now the name Shephelah might be correctly applied to the whole length of these low hills; but with one exception—in which it is probably used for the low hills that separate Carmel from Samaria[3]—it does not appear ever to have extended north of the Vale of Ajalon. All the towns mentioned in the Old Testament as in the Shephelah are south of this; and if the identification be correct of 'Adida in the Shephelah'[4] with Haditheh, four miles

[1] There is no positive proof of this in the Old Testament; but it perhaps occurs in Eusebius (see previous page, note 1).

[2] It is easy to see why, if it had once extended to the coast, it shrank to the low hills, for the Plain had a name of its own, Philistia, while the Jews required to distinguish the low hills from the Central Range.

[3] In Joshua xi. 16, after the Mount, the Negeb, the Arabah are mentioned, comes the phrase, and *the Mount of Israel and its Shephelah.* As I have elsewhere pointed out, this can only be that part of the Central Range which fell within the kingdom of North Israel, and the low hills between it and Carmel, cf. Josh. xi. 2. The Jer. Talmud gives an application of the name Shephelah across Jordan (quoted by Reland, ch. xlvii. p. 308), שפלתו חשבון.

[4] 1 Macc. xii. 38: *καὶ Σίμων ᾠκοδόμησε τὴν* Ἀδιδὰ ἐν τῇ Σεφηλᾷ—evidently as a cover to the road from Joppa which he had won for the Jews. The identification is due to Major Conder.

E.N.E. of Lydda, then this is the most northerly instance of the name. Roughly speaking, the Shephelah meant the low hills south of Ajalon, and not those north of Ajalon. Now, very remarkably, this distinction corresponds with a difference of a physical kind—in the relations of these two parts of the low hills to the Central Range. North of Ajalon the low hills which run out on Sharon are connected with the high mountains behind them. You ascend to the latter from Sharon either by long sloping ridges, such as that which to-day carries the telegraph-wire and the high road from Jaffa to Nablus ; or else you climb up terraces, such as the succession of ranges closely built upon one another, by which the country rises from Lydda to Bethel. That is, the low hills west of Samaria are (to use the Hebrew phrase) Ashedoth or Slopes of the Central Range, and not a separate group. But south of Ajalon the low hills do not so hang upon the Central Range, but are separated from the mountains of Judæa by a series of valleys, both wide and narrow, which run all the way from Ajalon to near Beer-sheba ; and it is only where the low hills are thus flung off the Central Range into an independent group, separating Judæa from Philistia, that the name Shephelah seems to have been applied to them.[1]

This difference in the relation of the low hills to the Central Range, north and south of Ajalon, illustrates two important historical phenomena. *First*, it explains some of the difference between the histories of Samaria and Judah. While the low hills opposite Samaria are really

[1] This is also true of the only other application of the name west of the Jordan, which I have suggested in n. 3 on the previous page. The low hills between Carmel and Dothan are flung off the Central Range in the same way as the Shephelah proper is.

only approaches, slopes and terraces of access to Samaria's centre, the southern low hills—those opposite Judah—offer no furtherance at all towards this more isolated province: to have conquered them is not to have got footing upon it. And *secondly*, this division between the Shephelah and Judah explains why the Shephelah has so much more interest and importance in history than the northern low hills, which are not so divided from Samaria. It is independent as they are not; and debatable as they cannot be. They are merged in Samaria. The Shephelah has a history of its own, for while they cannot be held by themselves, it can be, and was, so held at frequent famous periods of war and invasion.

Consequent difference between Samaria and Judæa.

This division between the Shephelah and Judæa is of such importance in the history of the land that it will be useful for us to follow it in detail.

As we ride across the Maritime Plain from Jaffa towards the Vale of Ajalon by the main road to Jerusalem, we become aware, as the road bends south, of getting behind low hills, which gradually shut out the view of the coast. These are spurs of the Shephelah: we are at the back of it, and in front of us are the high hills of the Central Range, with the wide gulf in them of the Vale of Ajalon. Near the so-called half-way house, the road to Jerusalem enters a steep and narrow defile, the Wady Ali, which is the real entrance to the Central Range, for at its upper end we come out among peaks over 2000 feet high. But if, instead of entering this steep defile, we turn to the south, crossing a broad low watershed, we shall find ourselves in the Wady el Ghurab, a valley running south-west, with hills to the east of us

The division between the Shephelah and Judæa.

touching 2000 feet, and hills to the west seldom above 800. The Wady el Ghurab brings us out upon the broad Wady es Surar, the Vale of Sorek, crossing which we find the mouth of the Wady en Najil,[1] and ride still south along its straight narrow bed. Here again the mountains to the east of us are over 2000 feet, cleft by narrow and tortuous defiles, difficult ascents to the Judæan plateau above, while to the west the hills of the Shephelah seldom reach 1000 feet, and the valleys among them are broad and easy. They might stand—especially if we remember that they have respectively Jerusalem and Philistia behind them—for the narrow and broad ways of our Lord's parable. From the end of Wady en Najil the passage is immediate to the Vale of Elah, the Wady es Sunt, at the spot where David slew Goliath, and from there the broad Wady es Sur runs south, separating by two or three miles the lofty and compact range of Judæa on the east from the lower, looser hills of the Shephelah on the west. The Wady es Sur terminates opposite Hebron:[2] and here the dividing hollow turns south-west, and runs between peaks of nearly 3000 feet high to the east, and almost nothing above 1500 to the west, into the Wady esh Sheria, which finds the sea south of Gaza, and may be regarded as the southern boundary of the Shephelah. I have ridden nearly every mile of this great fosse that has been planted along the ramparts of Judæa, and have described from my own observations the striking difference of its two sides. All down the east, let me repeat, runs that close and lofty barrier of the Central Range, penetrated only by difficult defiles,[3] its edge turreted here and there by a town, giving

[1] All g's are soft in the modern Arabic of Palestine ; gh is like the French gr in *grasseyé*.
[2] Near Terkumieh.
[3] See ch. xii., sec. 3.

proof of a table-land behind ; but all down the west the low scattered ranges and clusters of the Shephelah, with their shallow dales and softer brows, much open ground and wide passes to the sea. Riding along the fosse between, I understood why the Shephelah was always debatable land, open equally to Israelite and Philistine, and why the Philistine, who so easily overran the Shephelah, seldom got farther than its eastern border, on which many of his encounters with Israel took place.[1]

From this definition of its boundaries—so necessary to our appreciation of its independence alike of plain and of mountain—let us turn to a survey of the Shephelah itself.

General aspect of the Shephelah.

The mountains look on the Shephelah, and the Shephelah looks on the sea,—across the Philistine Plain. It curves round this plain from Gaza to Jaffa like an amphitheatre.[2] But the amphitheatre is cut by three or four great gaps, wide valleys that come right through from the foot of the Judæan hills to the sea. Between these gaps the low hills gather in clumps and in short ranges from 500 to 800 feet high, with one or two summits up to 1500. The formation is of limestone or chalk, and very soft—therefore irregular and

[1] The geology of this district has not yet been accurately studied ; but the distinction between the Central Range and the Shephelah seems to be coincident with the border between the Nummulite limestone on the west and the cretaceous on the east. Cf. also Hull on p. 63 of the *Geological Memoir of the P.E.F.* : 'The calcareous sandstone of Philistia,' as Hull designates it, is 'the key to the physical features of this part of Palestine, and accounts for the abrupt fall of the table-land of Central Palestine along the borders of Philistia, and along a line extending to the base of Mount Carmel ; as the harder limestones dip under and pass below the comparatively softer formation of which we are now speaking, and which has been more deeply denuded than the former.' See also p. 64.

[2] Trelawney Saunders, *Introduction*, p. 249.

almost featureless, with a few prominent outposts upon the plain. In the cross valleys there are perennial, or almost perennial, streams, with broad pebbly beds; the soil is alluvial and red, with great corn-fields. But on the slopes and glens of each hilly maze between the cross valleys the soil is a grey white; there are no perennial streams, and few springs, but many reservoirs of rain-water. The corn-fields straggle for want of level space, yet the olive-groves are finer than on either the plain below or the range above. Inhabited villages are frequent; the ruins of abandoned ones more so. But the prevailing scenery of the region is of short, steep hillsides and narrow glens, with a very few great trees, and thickly covered by brushwood and oak-scrub—crags and scalps of limestone breaking through, and a rough grey torrent-bed at the bottom of each glen. In the more open passes of the south, the straight line of a Roman road dominates the brushwood, or you will see the levelled walls of an early Christian convent, and perhaps the solitary gable of a Crusaders' church. In the rocks there are older monuments—large wine and oil presses cut on level platforms above ridges that may formerly have been vineyards; and once or twice on a braeside a huge boulder has well-worn steps up it, and on its top little cuplike hollows, evidently an ancient altar. Caves, of course, abound—near the villages, gaping black dens for men and cattle, but up the unfrequented glens they are hidden by hanging bush, behind which you disturb only the wild pigeon. Bees murmur everywhere, larks are singing; and although in the maze of hills you may wander for hours without meeting a man, or seeing a house, you are seldom out of sound of the human voice, shepherds and ploughmen calling to their cattle and to

each other across the glens. Higher up you rise to moorland, with rich grass if there is a spring, but otherwise, heath, thorns, and rough herbs that scent the wind. Bees abound here, too, and dragon-flies, kites and crows; sometimes an eagle floats over from the cliffs of Judæa. The sun beats strong, but you see and feel the sea; the high mountains are behind, at night they breathe upon these lower ridges gentle breezes, and the dews are very heavy.

Altogether it is a rough, happy land, with its glens and moors, its mingled brushwood and barley-fields; frequently under cultivation, but for the most part broken and thirsty, with few wells and many hiding-places; just the home for strong border-men like Samson, and just the theatre for that guerilla warfare, varied occasionally by pitched battles, which Israel and Philistia, the Maccabees and the Syrians, Saladin and Richard waged with each other.

The Valleys of the Shephelah.

The chief encounters of these foes naturally took place in the wide valleys, which cut right through the Shephelah maze. The strategic importance of these valleys can hardly be overrated, for they do not belong to the Shephelah alone. Each of them is continued by a defile into the very heart of Judæa, not far from an important city, and each of them has at its other end, on the coast, one of the five cities of the Philistines. To realise these valleys is to understand the wars that have been fought on the western watershed of Palestine from Joshua's time to Saladin's.

1. Take the most northerly of these valleys. The narrow plain, across which the present road to Jerusalem runs, brings you up from Lydda, to opposite the high Valley of Ajalon. The Valley of Ajalon, which is really

part of the Shephelah,[1] is a broad fertile plain gently sloping up to the foot of the Central Range, the steep wall of which seems to forbid further passage. But three gorges break through, and, with sloping ridges between them run up past the two Beth-horons on to the plateau at Gibeon, a few flat miles north of Jerusalem.[2] This has always been the easiest passage from the coast to the capital of Judæa—the most natural channel for the overflow of Israel westwards. In the first settlement of the land, it was down Ajalon that Dan pushed and touched for a time the sea;[3] after the exile, it was down Ajalon that the returned Jews cautiously felt their way, and fixed their westmost colonies at its mouth on the edge of the plain.[4] Throughout history we see hosts swarming up this avenue, or swept down it in flight. At the high head of it invading Israel first emerged from the Jordan Valley, and looked over the Shephelah towards the Great Sea. Joshua drove the Canaanites down to Makkedah in the Shephelah on that day when such long work had to be done that he bade the

Ajalon.

In the Old Testament.

[1] Thus the towns of Ajalon and Gimzo were in the Shephelah (2 Chron. xxviii. 18), and we have seen, according to the Talmud, the Shephelah extended from Emmaus to Lydda.

[2] The three roads from the Vale of Ajalon to Jerusalem are these: (1) On one of the sloping ridges between the gorges, you rise rapidly from the W. Selman 818 feet, by Beit-Likia 1600, Beit-Anon 2070, el Kubeibeh 2570, and so along the ridge by Biddu and Beit-Ikra 2525, across W. Beit-Hanîna to Kh. el Bedr 2519, and thence to Jerusalem. (2) Or you may follow the W. es Selman itself from 818 feet to 1157, 1610, 1840, till it brings you out at its head on the plateau of El-Jib 2400 feet, about five miles north of Jerusalem. (3) Or you may take the more famous Beth-horon road, which rises from Beit-Sira 840 feet on a spur to the lower Beth-horon 1240 feet, and thence traverses a ridge with the gorges of W. Selman to the south, and W. es Sunt and W. el Imeish to the north, to the upper Beth-horon (1730), and still following the ridge, comes out on the plateau of El-Jib a little to the north of No. 2.

[3] Chapter iii.

[4] Lydda, Ono, Hadid on the Ge-Haharashim, pp. 160 ff.

sun stand still for its accomplishment;[1] down Ajalon the early men of Ephraim and Benjamin raided the Philistines;[2] up Ajalon the Philistines swarmed to the very heart of Israel's territory at Michmash, disarmed the Israelites, and forced them to come down the Vale to get their tools sharpened, so that the mouth of the Vale was called the Valley of the Smiths even till after the exile;[3] down Ajalon Saul and Jonathan beat the Philistines from Michmash,[4] and by the same way, soon after his accession, King David *smote the Philistines*—who had come up about Jerusalem either by this route or the gorges leading from the Vale of Sorek—*from Gibeon until thou come to Gezer*,[5] that looks right up Ajalon. Ages later this rout found a singular counterpart. In 66 A.D. a Roman army under Cestius Gallus came up from Antipatris—on the 'Aujeh—by way of Ajalon. When they entered the gorges of the Central Range, they suffered from the sudden attacks of the Jews; and, although they actually set Jerusalem on fire and occupied part of it, they suddenly retreated by the way they had come. The Jews pursued, and, as far as Antipatris itself, smote them in thousands, as David had smitten the Philistines.[6] It may have been because of this that Titus, when he came up to punish the Jews two years later, avoided Ajalon and the gorges at its head, and took the higher and less covered road by Gophna to Gibeah.[7]

With the Romans.

The Vale of Ajalon was also overrun by the Egyptian

[1] Joshua x. 10. Makkedah is identified by Warren as el-Mughar to the south of Ekron, but this is very doubtful.

[2] 1 Chron. vii. 21; viii. 13.

[3] 1 Sam. xiii. 19. See p. 160 for the origin of the name, Ge-Haharashim.

[4] 1 Sam. xiii., xiv.; *ap.* xiv. 31.

[5] 2 Sam. v. 25; 1 Chron. xiv. 16.

[6] Josephus, ii. *Wars*, xix.

[7] v. *Wars*, ii.

invasions of Palestine. Egypt long held Gezer at the mouth of it, and Shishak's campaign included the capture of Beth-horon, Ajalon, Makkedah, and Jehudah, near Joppa.[1]

But it was in the time of the Maccabean wars and in the time of the Crusades that this part of the Shephelah was most famously contested.

With the Maccabees.

We have already seen that the Plain of Ajalon, with its mouth turned slightly northwards, lay open to the roads down the Maritime Plain from Carmel. It was, therefore, the natural entrance into Judæa for the Syrian armies who came south by the coast; and Modein, the home of the Maccabees, and the origin of the revolt against Syria, lies on the edge of Ajalon by the very path the invaders took.[2] Just as at Lydda, in this same district, the revolt afterwards broke out against the Romans in 66 A.D., so now in 166 B.C. it broke out against the Hellenising Syrians.[3] The first camps, both Jewish and Syrian, were pitched about Emmaus, not far off the present high road to Jerusalem.[4] The battles rolled—for

[1] On Gezer, 1 Kings ix. 15-17. On 'Shishak's Campaign:' Maspero in *Transactions of Victorian Institute*; W. Max Müller, *Asien u. Eur. nach. altägypt. Denkm.*, 166 f. The town of Ajalon is mentioned, in the Tell-el-Amarna Tablets, as one of the first to be taken from the Egyptian vassals.

[2] 1 Macc. ii. 1, 15, 23, 70; xiii. 25, 30; xvi. 4; 2 Macc. xiii. 4, Μωδεῖν or Μωδεεῖν. Variants, Μωδεεἰμ, 1 Macc. ii. 23; ix. 19; xiii. 25, 30; Μωδαεἰμ, xvi. 4; Μωδιεἰμ, 2 Macc. xiii. 14. In Josephus, Μωδεεῖμ or Μωδεεί, xii. *Antt.* vi. 1, xi. 2; xiii. *Antt.* vi. 5; Μωδεεῖν, i. *Wars* i. 3. *Onomast.* Euseb. Μηδεεἰμ, Jerome, Modeim. Evidently a plural word, now in the Hebrew form, now in the Aramæic. So Talmud, Modî'îm מוריעים : but also Modî'îth מוריעית (Neubauer, *Geog. Talm.*, § 99). Either of these would give the present Medieh or Midieh, a village seven miles ESE. of Lydda (Neubauer), which suits Eusebius' statement that Medieh was near Lydda, and 1 Macc. xiii. 29, that the monument of the Maccabees could be seen from the sea. Forner had also proposed Medieh, *Le Monde*, 1866 (Guérin). Robinson takes Latrun, and in *Judée*, i. 311, Guérin inclines to this.

[3] 1 Macc. ii.

[4] *Ibid.* iii.

the battles in the Shephelah were always rolling battles —between Beth-horon and Gezer, and twice the pursuit of the Syrians extended across the last ridges of the Shephelah to Jamnia and Ashdod.[1] Jonathan swept right down to Joppa and won it.[2] But the tide sometimes turned, and the Syrians mastering the Shephelah fortresses, swept up Ajalon to the walls of Jerusalem;[3] though they preferred on occasions to turn the flank of the Jews by coming through Samaria,[4] or gaining the Judæan table-land at Bethsura by one of the southern defiles.[5]

In the Crusades.

Now, up and down this great channel thirteen centuries later the fortune of war ebbed and flowed in an almost precisely similar fashion. Like the Syrians— and, indeed, from the same centre of Antioch —the Crusaders took their way to Jerusalem by Tyre, Acre, and Joppa, and there turned up through the Shephelah and the Vale of Ajalon. The First Crusaders found no opposition; two days sufficed for their march from Ramleh, by Beth-horon, to the Holy City. Through the Third Crusade, however, Saladin firmly held the Central Range, and though parties of Christians swept up within sight of Jerusalem, their camps never advanced beyond Ajalon. But all the Shephelah rang with the exploits of Richard. Fighting his way, as we have seen, from Carmel along the foot of the low hills, with an enemy perpetually assailing his flank, Richard established himself at Joppa, opposite the mouth of Ajalon. Thence

[1] 1 Macc. iii., iv., vii., ix.

[2] *Ibid.* x. 75, 76.

[3] In Judas' lifetime, but when he was absent the Jews were pursued 'to the borders of Judæa,' *Ibid.* v. 57-61. And again in the campaign in which Judas was slain, *Ibid.* ix.; and the battle between Jonathan and Bacchides, when the latter took Emmaus and Gezer, *Ibid.* ix. 50, 52.

[4] Probably the line of Bacchides' advance, *Ibid.* ix. 1-4.

[5] *Ibid.* iv. 29, vi. 31, 49, 50, ix. 52, etc.

he pushed gradually inland, planting forts or castles—on the plain, Plans and Maen; on the edge of the Shephelah, Mirabel and Montgisard; and up the Vale of Ajalon, the Chateau d'Arnauld, perhaps the present El-Burj; Turon (now Latrun) on one side, and Emmaus (now Amwâs) on the other side of the present road to Jerusalem—till he reached Betenoble, far up the vale, and near the foot of the Central Range.[1] But Richard did not confine his tactics to the Vale of Ajalon. Like the Syrians, when he found this blocked, he turned southwards, and made a diversion upon the Judæan table-land, up one of the parallel valleys of the Shephelah, and then, when that failed, returned suddenly to Betenoble.[2] All

Richard I. and the Shephelah.

[1] The sites of most of these Crusading strongholds are uncertain. Both Plans and Maen lay east of Joppa, but not east of Ramleh (Vinsauf, *Itiner. Ricard.* iv. 29). So Maen cannot be El-Burj or Deir Ma'in (Guérin, *Jud.* i. 337), and of Conder's two suggestions (*Syr. Stone Lore*, 398) the second is the correct one. Plans has not been found.—The only difficulty in accepting Conder's identification of Mirabel with the present El-Mirr, near Ras-el-Ain, north-east of Joppa, is that the latter is on the plain, whereas Vinsauf says the Turks whom Richard scattered fled to Mirabel, that is, if El-Mirr be Mirabel, north-west and *towards* the plains which the Christians held.—On Montgisard (Rey), or Mont Gisart (Cl. Ganneau), see pp. 215-218.—Chateau d'Arnauld is described by William of Tyre as 'in descensu montium, in primis auspiciis campestrium, via qui itur Liddam.' The site is uncertain—El-Burg (De Saulcy), Kharûbeh (Guérin).—Latrûn derived by mediævals from Latro, and supposed to be the den Boni Latronis of the Good Thief, Dimna (Quaresm. *Eluc. Terr. Sanct.* ii. 12) is really El-Atrun. This may be from either (1) old French *touron* or *turon*, an isolated hill, for in 1244 Latrûn was called Turo Militum (Rey, *Colon. Franques*, 300, 413), and Turon might easily become, according to a well-known law in the Arab adoption of foreign words, Atron, like *itfa* from *tafa*; or (2) Arabic Natrun, post of observation, with article En-Natrun, that might as easily become El-Latrun, or the present Arabic El-Atrun. Cf. Nöldeke, *Z.D.P.V.* vii. 141.—Betenoble: 'Near the foot of the mountains,' Vinsauf, iv. 34. Betenoble is philologically liker Beit Nabàla, on the edge of the Maritime Plain, four miles north-east of Lydda, than Beit Nuba, which is at the other end of the Vale of Ajalon, near Yalo. But other references in Vinsauf, though not conclusive (v. 49, vi. 9), imply that it was well inland from Ramleh.

[2] Vinsauf, v. 46-48.

this cost him from August 1191 to June 1192. He was then within twelve miles of Jerusalem as the crow flies, and on a raid he actually saw the secluded city, but he retired. His funds were exhausted, and his followers quarrelsome. He feared, too, the summer drought of Jerusalem, which had compelled Cestius Gallus to withdraw in the moment of victory. But, above all, Richard's retreat from the foot of the Central Range illustrates what I have already emphasised, that to have taken the Shephelah was really to be no nearer Judæa. The baffled Crusaders fell back through their castles in the Shephelah to the coast. Saladin moved after them, occupying Mont Gisart, and taking Joppa; and though Richard relieved the latter, and the coast remained with the Crusaders for the next seventy years, the Shephelah, with its European castles and cloisters, passed wholly from Christian possession.

We have won a much more vivid imagination of the far-off campaigns of Joshua and David by following the marches of Judas Maccabeus, the rout of the Roman legions, and the advance and retreat of Richard Lionheart —the last especially described with so much detail. The natural lines, which all those armies had to follow, remained throughout the centuries the same: the same were the difficulties of climate, forage and locomotion; so that the best commentaries on many chapters of the Old Testament are the Books of the Maccabees, the Annals of Josephus, and the Chronicles of the Crusades. History never repeats itself without explaining its past.

One point in the Northern Shephelah, round which these tides of war have swept, deserves special notice—Gezer, or Gazar. It is one of the few remarkable bastions which the

Shephelah flings out to the west—on a ridge running towards Ramleh, the most prominent object in view of the traveller from Jaffa towards Jerusalem. It is high and isolated, but fertile and well watered —a very strong post and striking landmark. Its name occurs in the Egyptian correspondence of the fourteenth century, where it is described as being taken from the Egyptian vassals by the tribes whose invasion so agitates that correspondence.[1] A city of the Canaanites, under a king of its own—Horam—Gezer is not given as one of Joshua's conquests, though the king is;[2] but the Israelites *drave not out the Canaanites who dwelt at Gezer*,[3] and in the hands of these it remained till its conquest by Egypt when Pharaoh gave it, with his daughter, to Solomon, and Solomon rebuilt it.[4] Judas Maccabeus was strategist enough to gird himself early to the capture of Gezer, and Simon fortified it to cover the way to the harbour of Joppa, and caused John, his son, the captain of the host, to dwell there.[5] It was virtually, therefore, the key of Judæa at a time when Judæa's foes came down the coast from the north; and, with Joppa, it formed part of the Syrian demands upon the Jews.[6] But this is by no means the last of it. M. Clermont Ganneau, who a number of years ago discovered the site,[7] has lately identified Gezer

Gezer Mont Gisart.

[1] See 2 *R.P.* 74, 78; Conder's *Tell-el-Amarna Tablets*, 122, 134-138, 147. Conder, as has been said already, holds that these invaders are the Hebrews. But this is not proved. On the Amarna tablets Gezer appears as Gazri; in the Egyptian inscriptions as Kadiru.

[2] Josh. x. 33.

[3] Josh. xvi. 3, 10; Judges i. 19.

[4] 1 Kings ix. 15-17. See W. Max Müller, *op. cit.* 160, 390.

[5] 1 Macc. xiii. 43 (where Gaza should read Gazara, cf. Josephus xiii. *Ant.* vi. 7; i. *Wars* ii. 2) and 53.

[6] 1 Macc. xv. 28.

[7] By finding upon it two stones, evidently dated from the time of the Maccabees, *P.E.F.Q.*, 1875.

with the Mont Gisart of the Crusades.[1] Mont Gisart was a castle and fief in the county of Joppa, with an abbey of St. Katharine of Mont Gisart, 'whose prior was one of the five suffragans of the Bishop of Lydda.' It was the scene, on 24th November 1174, seventeen years before the Third Crusade, of a victory won by a small army from Jerusalem under the boy-king, the leper Baldwin IV., against a very much larger army under Saladin himself, and, in 1192, Saladin encamped upon it during his negotiations for a truce with Richard.[2]

Shade of King Horam, what hosts of men have fallen round that citadel of yours! On what camps and columns has it looked down through the centuries, since first you saw the strange Hebrews burst with the sunrise across the hills, and chase your countrymen down Ajalon—that day when the victors felt the very sun conspiring with them to achieve the unexampled length of battle. Within sight of every Egyptian and every Assyrian invasion of the land, Gezer has also seen Alexander pass by, and the legions of Rome in unusual flight, and the armies of the Cross struggle, waver and give way, and Napoleon come and go. If all could rise who have fallen around its base—Ethiopians, Hebrews, Assyrians, Arabs, Turcomans, Greeks, Romans, Celts, Saxons, Mongols—what a rehearsal of the Judgment Day it would be! Few of the travellers who now rush across the plain realise that the first conspicuous hill they pass in Palestine is also one of the most thickly haunted—even in that narrow land into which history has so crowded itself. But upon the ridge of Gezer no sign of all this now remains, except in the name Tell Jezer, and in a sweet hollow to the north, beside a fountain, where lie

[1] *Recueil d'Archéol. Orient.*, Paris, 1888, pp. 351-92. [2] *Ibid.* p. 359.

the scattered Christian stones of Deir Warda, the Convent of the Rose.

Up none of the other valleys of the Shephelah has history surged as up and down Ajalon and past Gezer, for none are so open to the north, nor present so easy a passage to Jerusalem.

2. The next Shephelah valley, however, the Wady es Surar, or Vale of Sorek, has an importance of its own, and, remarkably enough, is to be the future road to Jerusalem. The new railway from Jaffa, instead of being carried up Ajalon, turns south at Ramleh by the pass through the low sandhills to Ekron, and thence runs up the Wady es Surar and its continuing defile through the Judæan range on to that plain south-west of Jerusalem, which probably represents the ancient Vale of Rephaim. It is the way the Philistines used to come up in the days of the Judges and of David; there is no shorter road into Judæa from Ekron, Jamnia, and perhaps Ashdod.[1] Askalon would be better reached—as it was by the Crusaders when they held Jerusalem—by way of the Wady es Sunt and Tell-es-Sâfiyeh.

The Vale of Sorek.

Just before the Wady es Surar approaches the Judæan range, its width is increased by the entrance of the Wady Ghurab from the north-west, and by the Wady en Najîl from the south. A great basin is thus formed with the low hill of Artuf, and its village in the centre. Surâ‘, the ancient Zorah, and Eshua‘,[2] perhaps Eshtaol, lie on the slopes to

[1] By the Wady es Surar Jerusalem is some twenty-eight miles from Ekron, thirty-two from Jamnia, thirty-eight from Ashdod, forty-five from Askalon.

[2] Sura‘a صرعا is without doubt the Hebrew צרעה. It is 1100 feet above the sea, say 800 above the valley. Eshua‘ اشوع is far in sound from Eshta‘ol אשתאול, but the shrinkage in the name is possible, and the village lies near

the north ; Ain Shems, in all probability Beth-shemesh, lies on the southern slope opposite Zorah. When you see this basin, you at once perceive its importance. Fertile and well-watered—a broad brook runs through it, with tributary streamlets—it lies immediately under the Judæan range, and at the head of a valley passing down to Philistia, while at right angles to this it is crossed by the great line of trench, which separates the Shephelah from Judæa. Roads diverge from it in all directions. Two ascend the Judæan plateau by narrow defiles from the Wady en Najîl, another and greater defile, still under the name Wady es Surar, runs up east to the plateau next Jerusalem, and others north-east into the rough hills known to the Old Testament as Mount Jearim, while the road from Beit-Jibrin comes down the Wady en Najîl, and continues by a broad and easy pass to Amwas and the Vale of Ajalon. As a centre, then, between the southern and northern valleys of the Shephelah, and between Judæa and Philistia, this basin was sure to become important. Immediately under the central range it was generally held by Israel, who could swiftly pour down upon it by five or six different defiles.[1] It was also open to Philistia, and had easy

Sura'a. Guérin says he heard at Beit Atab ' an old tradition ' that Eshua' was originally Eshu'al or Eshthu'al. This is interesting, and deserves confirmation,—if possible. Kh. Sûrîk seems an echo of the ancient Sorek.

[1] Of the two roads to the south of the main defile the more southerly leaves Ain Shems, crosses the Wady en Najîl, enters a defile to the south of Deir Aban, and reaches the plateau at Beit Atab, 2052 ft : thence over the stony moorland to El-Khudr, on the Jerusalem-Hebron road : a bare road, with no obstacles after you are out of the defile, it may be shortened by cutting across to Bittir. The other road is almost parallel to this one ; it rises to the plateau at Deir el Hawa, crosses to Er Ras, and so by Milhah to Jerusalem. The road up the main defile follows it till Khurbet El Loz is reached, then leaves it and crosses to the Jerusalem-Jaffa road. Another road crosses from Zorah to the foot of Mount Jearim, and traverses this to Soba, and another follows the Wady el Ghurab to, like the last, the Jerusalem high road.

passage to the Vale of Ajalon, whose towns are often classed with its own.[1]

On the northern bank of this basin the homeless tribe of Dan found a temporary settlement. The territory, which the Book of Joshua assigns to Dan,[2] lies down the two parallel valleys that lead through the Shephelah to the sea, Ajalon and Sorek, and the Song of Deborah seems to imply that they reached the coast,—*why did Dan abide in ships?*[3] But either Deborah speaks in scorn of futile ambitions westward, which were stirred in Dan by the sight of the sea from the Shephelah, and Dan never reached the sea at all; or else the tribe had been driven back from the coast, for now they lay poised on the broad pass between their designated valleys, retaining only two of their proper towns, Zorah and Eshtaol. It was a position close under the eaves of Israel's mountain home, yet open to attacks from the plain. They found it so intolerable that they moved north, even to the sources of the Jordan; but not without stamping their name on the place they left, in a form which showed how temporary their hold of it had been. It was called the Camp of Dan. Here, in Zorah, either before or after the migration, their great tribal hero, Samson, was born.[4]

The Camp of Dan.

[1] Zorah and Ajalon are also coupled in one of the Tell-el-Amarna Letters, 137, in the Berlin collection; Conder, *Tell-el-Amarna Tablets*, 156. Josh. xix. 40-48: the towns assigned to Dan. 2 Chron. xi. 10, *Zorah and Ajalon*, fortified by Rehoboam.

[2] Josh. xix. 40-48.

[3] Judges v. 17. But see Budde's reading of this, *Richt. Sam.*, p. 16, n. 2.

[4] In Judges the camp of Dan is twice mentioned, in the life of Samson, which forms part of the body of the Book, where it is placed *between Zorah and Eshtaol*, xiii. 25; and in the account of the Danite migration, which forms one of some appendages to the Book, where it is said to have been the muster-place of the soldiers of Dan when they *came up from Zorah and Eshtaol*, and to have lain *in Kiriath Jearim in Judah*, xviii. 12, 13; and a clause adds, *lo, it is behind*, i.e. *west of*, *Kiriath Jearim*. Now the same

It is as fair a nursery for boyhood as you will find in all the land—a hillside facing south against the sunshine, with corn, grass, and olives, scattered boulders and winter brooks, the broad valley below with the pebbly stream and screens of oleanders, the south-west wind from the sea blowing over all. There *the child Samson grew up ; and the Lord blessed him, and the Spirit of the Lord began to move him in the camp of Dan between Zorah and Eshtaol.*

Samson.

Across the Valley of Sorek, in full view, is Beth-shemesh, now 'Ain Shems, House and Well of the the Sun, with which name it is so natural to connect his own—Shimshon, 'Sun-like.' Over the low hills beyond is Timnah, where he found his first love and killed the young lion.[1] Beyond is the Philistine Plain, with its miles upon miles of corn, which, if as closely sown then as now, would require scarce three, let alone three hundred foxes, with torches on their tails, to set it all afire. The Philistine cities are but a day's march away, by easy roads. And so from these country braes to yonder plains and the highway

place could not have lain between Zorah and Eshtaol, and away from both in Kiriath Jearim. We have evidently, therefore, two different narratives, and in fact they are distinguished by critics on other, textual, grounds. (Budde, *Richt. Sam.*, assigns the former to the Jahvist, the latter to the Elohist, 138 ff.) In this case the clause on xviii. 12, *it is west of Kiriath Jearim*, is probably a gloss added to modify what precedes it, and bring it into harmony with xiii. 25, for the locality between Zorah and Eshtaol may be described as lying west of Kiriath Jearim, and that, whether the latter be the present Kuriet Einab or Khurbet 'Erma. Again, since xviii. 11-13 is part of the appendix to the Book of Judges, and therefore is not in chronological sequence from the earlier chapters, it is difficult to say whether Dan's migration came before or after the events of Samson's life. If before, then some Danite families had stayed behind in Zorah and Eshtaol, which is very likely, and the theory becomes possible, though not probable, that the name Camp of Dan, being given, as described in xviii. 13, to a particular spot in Kiriath Jearim, had gradually extended to the whole district, which the temporary settlement of Dan had covered. The one thing certain is, that we have two documents.

[1] See pp. 79 f.

of the great world—from the pure home and the mother who talked with angels, to the heathen cities, their harlots and their prisons—we see at one sweep of the eye all the course in which this uncurbed strength, at first tumbling and sporting with laughter like one of its native brooks, like them also ran to the flats and the mud, and, being darkened and befouled, was used by men to turn their mills.[1]

The theory that the story of Samson is a mere sun-myth, edited for the sacred record by an orthodox Jew, has never received acceptance from the leading critics, who have all been convinced that though containing elements of popular legend, its hero was an actual personage. Those who study the story of Samson along with its geography must

[1] The other scenes of Samson's life have not been yet satisfactorily identified. For the rock 'Etam and its cleft Conder proposes (so also Henderson, *Pal.*, p. 109) a peculiar cave at Beit 'Atab (*b* and *m* being interchangeable) on the Judæan plateau. But the cave at Beit 'Atab (I have visited the place) is too large to be described as a cleft, and if 'Etam had been so high up the narrative would not have said (Judges xv. 8) that Samson *went down* to it. Coming up from Zorah to Beit 'Atab on a summer day, one feels that strongly. Schick, *Z.D.P.V.* x. 143, proposes more plausibly (Guthe thinks correctly) the Arâk Isma'in a cave in a rock on the north of Wady Isma'in. Lehi he finds, in Khurbet es Ṣiyyâgh (الصياغ in the Name Lists, *P.E.F. Mem.*), ruins at mouth of W. en Najîl. Aquila and Symmachus, and Jos. (v. *Antt.* ix. 8, 9) translate Lehi Σιαγών, and Schick reports E. of Ṣiyyâgh an 'Ain Nakura. But Ṣiyyâgh could have come from Siagon only through Greeks and Christians, and is therefore a late and valueless tradition. Conder suggests for Ramath-Lehi and En-haḳḳore, the 'Ayûn Abu Meharib, 'founts of the place of battles,' sometimes called 'Ayûn Kara, 'founts of a crier,' near Kesla, where there is a chapel dedicated to Sheikh Nedhir, 'the Nazarite chief,' and a ruin with the name Ism Allah, which he suggests is a corruption of Esm'a Allah, 'God heard.' This is interesting, but also inconclusive. See Hend., *Pal.* 110, who suggests the serrated appearance of W. Ismain as originating the name Lehi: Hashen, the tooth, occurs up it. Guérin heard the Weli Sh. Gharib called by the name Ḳabr Shamshun, but this may be a very recent legend. He puts these scenes at 'Ain el Lehi, north-west of Bethlehem (*Jud.* ii. 317 ff., 396 ff.). Buhl (p. 91) counts Schick's identifications uncertain.

feel that the story has at least a basis of reality. Unlike the exploits of the personifications of the Solar Fire in Aryan and Semitic mythologies, those of Samson are confined to a very limited region. The attempts to interpret them as phases or influences of the sun, or to force them into a cycle like the labours of Hercules, have broken down.[1] To me it seems just as easy and just as futile to read the story of this turbulent strength as the myth of a mountain-stream, at first exuberant and sporting with its powers, but when it has left its native hills, mastered and darkened by men, and yet afterwards bursting its confinement and taking its revenge upon them. For it is rivers, and not sunbeams, that work mills and overthrow temples. But the idea of finding any nature-myth in such a story is far-fetched. As Hitzig emphasises, it is not a nature-force but a character with whom we have to deal here, and, above all, the religious element in the story, so far from being a later flavour imparted to the original material, is the very life of the whole.[2]

The head of the Vale of Sorek has usually been regarded as the scene of the battle in which the Philistines took the ark.[3] The place, as we have seen, was convenient both to Israel and Philistia, and it has been argued that in afterwards bringing back the ark to Beth-shemesh,[4] the Philistines were seeking to make their atonement exact by

[1] Goldziher, *Hebrew Mythology*. E. Wietzke, *Der Biblische Simson der Ægyptische Horus Ra*: Wittenberg, 1888. The etymologies of this work are an instance of the length that men will go when hunting for myths.

[2] This point is well put by Orelli, Herzog's *Real-Encycl.* Cf. Hitzig, Ewald, Stade, Kittel, in their histories of Israel. All deny the myth, admit legend, and allow that the hero was historical. Budde, *Richt. Sam.* 133, holds to Kuenen's position that the narrator knew nothing of a myth, but says 'the legendary nature of the narratives is *selbst verständlich*.'

[3] 1 Samuel iv.

[4] 1 Samuel vii.

restoring their booty at the spot where they had captured it ; and that the stone on which they rested the Ark may have been the Eben-ezer, or Stone of Help, near which they had defeated the Israelites, and the Israelites are said (in another document)[1] afterwards to have defeated them. But these reasons do not reach more than probability. The name neither of Eben-ezer nor of Aphek has been identified in the neighbourhood, and on the data of the narratives Eben-ezer may just as probably have lain farther north—say at the head of Ajalon.[2]

Eben-Ezer.

The course of the ark's return, however, is certain. It was up the broad Vale of Sorek that the untended kine of Beth-shemesh dragged the cart behind them with the ark upon it, *lowing as they went, and turned not aside to the right or to the left, and the lords of the Philistines went after them unto the borders of Beth-shemesh. And Beth-shemesh*—that is to say, all the villagers, as is the custom at harvest-time—were *in the valley*—the village itself lay high up on the valley's

Beth-shemesh and the Ark.

[1] I Samuel vii.

[2] The argument stated above for the identity of the great stone by Beth-shemesh (I Samuel vi. 14, 18) with Eben-ezer (iv. 1, v. 1, and vii. 12) is M. Clermont Ganneau's (*P.E.F.Q.*, 1874, 279 : 1877, 154 ff.). Wilson thinks Deir Aban too remote from Shiloh and Mizpeh. Certainly it does not suit the topography of I Samuel vii. 11, 12, which, by the way, is from another document than chapters iv., v., and vi. According to the Hebrew text of vii. 11, 12, Ebenezer is under Beth-car, perhaps but not certainly the present 'Ain Karim, and between Mizpeh and Hashen, the tooth ; but according to the LXX. under Beth-Jashan, between Mizpeh and Jashan or Jeshanah, that is, 'Ain Sinia north of Bethel (as M. Clermont Ganneau himself suggests), and therefore on a possible line of Philistine advance. Chaplin (*P.E.F.Q.* 1888, 263 ff.) suggests Beit Iksa for Ebenezer ; Conder, Deir el Azar, near Kuriet el Enab, and finds the name Aphek in Merj Fikieh, near Bab el Wad. See also Milner, *P.E.F.Q.*, 1887, iii. The Aphek marked on the *P.E.F.* Red. Survey Map (1891) at Kh. Beled el Foka, south of Beth-shemesh, is one of the too many identifications which impair the clearness and usefulness of this fine map.

southern bank—*reaping the wheat harvest, and they lifted up their eyes and saw the ark, and came rejoicing to meet it.*[1] *And the cart came into the field of Joshua the Bethshemite and stood there, and a great stone was there, and they clave the wood of the cart, and the kine they offered as a burnt-offering to Jehovah*—certainly upon the stone. *And the five lords of the Philistines saw, and returned to Ekron the same day. . . And the great stone whereon they set down the ark of Jehovah is a witness thereof in the field of Joshua the Bethshemite.*

In the Shephelah, however, the ark was not to remain. The story continues that some of the careless harvesters, who had run to meet the ark, treated it too familiarly—*gazed at it —and Jehovah smote of them threescore and ten men.*[2] The plague which the ark had brought upon Philistia clung about it still. As stricken Ashdod had passed it on to Gath, Gath to Ekron, and Ekron to Beth-shemesh, so Beth-shemesh now made haste to deposit it upon Jehovah's own territory of the hills : *To whom shall he go up from us?* The nearest hill-town was Kiriath Jearim, *the Town of the Woods.*[3] This must have lain somewhere about Mount Jearim, the rugged, wooded highlands, which look down on the basin of Sorek from the north of the great defile. But the exact site is not known with certainty. Some think it was the present Kuriet 'Enab to the north of Mount Jearim, and others Khurbet 'Erma to the south, near the mouth of the great defile. Each of these, it is claimed, echoes the ancient name ; each suits the descriptions of Kiriath Jearim in the Old Testament. For the story of the ark Khurbet 'Erma has the advantage, lying close to Beth-shemesh, and yet in

Kiriath Jearim.

[1] So the LXX.

[2] Most authorities omit the previous *fifty thousand.*

[3] Jer. xxvi. 20,

the hill-country. Leaving the question of the exact site open, we must be satisfied with the knowledge that Kiriath Jearim lay on the western border of Benjamin ; once the ark was set there, it was off the debatable ground of the Shephelah and within Israel's proper territory. Here, in *the field of the woods*,[1] it rested till David brought it up to Jerusalem, and that was probably why Kiriath Jearim was also called Kiriath Baal, or Baal of Judah, for in those times Baal was not a name of reproach, but the title even of Jehovah as Lord and Preserver of His people's land.[2]

Vale of Elah.

3. The third valley which cuts the Shephelah is the Wady es Sunt, which, when it gets to the back of the low hills, turns south into the Wady es Sur, the great trench between the Shephelah and Judah. Near the turning the narrow Wady el Jindy curves off to the north-west to the neighbourhood of Bethlehem. The Wady es Sunt is probably the Vale of Elah.[3] Its

[1] Psalm cxxxii. 6.

[2] Robinson suggested K. 'Enab, and this suits the data of the *Onomasticon*, which places Kiriath Jearim at the ninth milestone from Jerusalem towards Lydda. It lies also convenient to the other towns of the Gibeonite League to which it belonged, Gibeon, Chephirah, and Beeroth (Joshua ix. 17 ; cf. Ezra ii. 25) ; it suits the place of Kiriath Jearim on the borders of Judah and Benjamin (Joshua xv. 9, xviii. 14), and it can be reached by an easy road from Beth-shemesh. Khurbet 'Erma was first suggested by Henderson, and then examined and accepted by Conder (see Henderson's *Palestine*, 85, 112, 210). The name has the consonants of Je'arim (exactly those in Ezra ii. 25, where the name is 'arim), but it also means 'heaps of corn,' and may not be derived from the ancient name. The site may be fitted into the line of the borders of Benjamin and Judah. The site is ancient, with a platform of rock that has all the appearance of a high-place or shrine (Conder, *P.E.F.Q.*, 1881, 265). But it is very far away from the other members of the Gibeonite league. On Baal-Jehudah, see 2 Samuel vi. 2.

[3] Sunt is the terebinth. Elah is any large evergreen tree, like ilex or terebinth (Baudissin, *Stud.* ii. 185, n. 1). The Vale of Elah. 1 Samuel xvii. 2, 19 ; xxi. 9.

entrance from the Philistine Plain is commanded by the famous Tell-es-Sâfiyeh, the Blanchegarde of the Crusaders, whose high white front looks west across the plain twelve miles to Ashdod. Blanchegarde must always have been a formidable position, and it is simply inability to assign to the site any other Biblical town—for Libnah has no satisfactory claims—that makes the case so strong for its having been the site of Gath. Blanchegarde is twenty-three miles from Jerusalem, but the way up is most difficult after you leave the Wady es Sunt. It is a remarkable fact that when Richard decided to besiege Jerusalem, and had already marched from Askalon to Blanchegarde on his way, instead of then pursuing the Wady es Sunt and its narrow continuation to Bethlehem, he preferred to turn north two days' march across the Shephelah hills with his flank to the enemy, and to attack his goal up the Valley of Ajalon.[1]

Tell-es-Safi.

An hour's ride from Tell-es-Safi up the winding Vale of Elah brings us through the Shephelah, to where the Wady es Sur turns south towards Hebron,[2] and the narrow Wady el Jindy strikes up towards Bethlehem. At the junction of the three there is a level plain, a quarter of a mile broad, cut by two brooks, which combine to form the stream down Wady es Sunt. This plain is probably the scene of David's encounter with Goliath; for to the south of it, on the low hills that bound the Wady es Sunt in that direction, is the name Shuweikeh, probably the Shocoh, on which the Philistines rested their rear and faced the Israelites across the valley.

David and Goliath.

The 'Gai,' or ravine, which separated them has been

[1] Vinsauf, *Itin. Ric.* v. 48. See p. 214.

[2] The Wady es Sur and the Wady es Sunt are parts of the same Wady.

recognised in the deep trench which the combined streams have cut through the level land, and on the other side there is the Wady el Jindy, a natural road for the Israelites to have come down from their hills. Near by is Beit Fased, probably an echo of Ephes-Dammim, and on the spot where we should seek for the latter. It is the very battle-field for those ancient foes: Israel in one of the gateways to her mountain-land; the Philistines on the low hills they so often overran; and between them the great valley that divides Judah from the Shephelah. Major Conder and Principal Miller have given detailed descriptions of the battle and its field.[1] Only the following needs to be added: Shocoh is a strong position isolated from the rest of the ridge, and it keeps open the line of retreat down the valley. Saul's army was probably not immediately opposite, but a little way up on the slopes of the incoming Wady el Jindy, and so placed that the Philistines, in attacking it, must cross not only the level land and the main stream, but one of the two other streams as well, and must also climb the slopes for some distance. Both positions were thus very strong, and this fact perhaps explains the long hesitation of the armies in face of each other, even though the Philistines had the advantage of Goliath. The Israelite position certainly looks the stronger. It is interesting, too, that from its rear the narrow pass goes right up to the interior of the land near Bethlehem; so that the shepherd-boy, whom the story represents as being sent by his father for news of the battle, would have almost twelve miles to cover between his father's house and the camp.

[1] Conder, *P.E.F.Q.*, 1876, 40; *T.W.*, 279. Miller, *Least of all Lands*, ch. v., with a plan of the field. Cf. Cheyne, *Hallowing of Criticism.*

If you ride southwards from the battle-field up the Wady es Sur, you come in about two hours to a wide valley running into the Shephelah on the right. On the south side of this there is a steep hill, with a well at the foot of it, and at the top the shrine of a Mohammedan saint. They call the hill by a name 'Aid-el-ma, in which it is possible to hear 'Adullam, and its position suits all that we are told about David's stronghold. It stands well off the Central Range, and is very defensible. There is water in the valley, and near the top some large low caves, partly artificial. If we can dismiss the idea that all David's four hundred men got into the cave of Adullam—a pure fancy for which the false tradition, that the enormous cave of Khareîtun near Bethlehem is Adullam, is responsible—we shall admit that this hill was just such a *stronghold* as David is said to have chosen. It looks over to Judah, and down the Wady es Sunt; it covers two high-roads into the former, and Bethlehem, from which David's three mighty men carried the water he sighed for, is, as the crow flies, not twelve miles away. The site is, therefore, entirely suitable; and yet we cannot say that there is enough resemblance in the modern name to place it beyond doubt as Adullam.[1]

Adullam.

[1] The tradition that Adullam is the great cave of Khareîtun (*i.e.* Saint Chariton, d. 410), SE. of Bethlehem, cannot be traced behind the Crusaders. It is probably due to them. The Adullam of the Old Testament lay off the Central Range altogether, for men from the latter *went down* to it (Gen. xxxviii. 1; 1 Sam. xxii. 1; 2 Sam. xxiii. 13). The prophet Gad bids David leave it and go *into the land of Judah* (1 Sam. xxii. 5); and it is reckoned with Shocoh, Azekah, Gath, Mareshah, and other towns in the Shephelah west of Hebron (Joshua xv. 35, in the list of towns *in the Shephelah*, v. 33; Nehemiah xi. 30; Micah i. 15; 2 Chronicles xi. 7; cf. 2 Macc. xii. 38). So great a mass of evidence is conclusive for a position somewhere in the Shephelah. It is not contradicted in the two passages (2 Samuel xxiii. 13; 1 Chronicles xi. 15) describing how water was brought to David in Adullam

The only other famous site up the Wady es Sur is that of Ke'ilah, or Kegilah. It is probably the present Kela, a hill covered with ruins on the Judæan side of the valley. When David returned from Adullam to Judah, he heard that the Philistines were besieging Ke'ilah, a fenced town *with bolts and bars.*[1] In obedience to the oracle of Jehovah, he and his men attacked the Philistines, and relieved it. But Saul heard he was there, and hoped, with the connivance of the inhabitants, to catch him in a trap. David, therefore, hurriedly left Ke'ilah, and for a time the whole Shephelah, for the wilderness on the other side of Judah.[2]

Ke'ilah.

4. The fourth of the valleys that cut the Shephelah is

from the well at Bethlehem, twelve miles from the nearest site on the Shephelah. Stade (*G.V.I.* i. 244) reads 1 Samuel xxiii. 3, as ascribing to Adullam a position in Judah, but he manages this only by reading xxii. 5 as a gloss, and for this there are no real grounds. Retain xxii. 5, which tells how David went back from Adullam to Judah, and xxiii. 3, though probably from another document than xxii., follows on correctly. Finally, there is no reason for separating the cave from the city Adullam (so Birch, *P.E.F.Q.*, 1884, p. 61; 1886, p. 31). Adullam, then, being proved to be on the Shephelah, the next question is the exact site. And as to this, it is safest to say that, while many sites are possible, 'Aid-el-ma is the preferable. It is the only one that possibly has an echo of the old name, and, lying as it does on the east of the Shephelah, it suits Adullam's frequent association in the Old Testament with Shocoh and Azekah, while it is only some seven miles from Mareshah, with which Micah joins it. Deir Dubban, suggested by V. de Velde (*Reise, etc.*, ii. 155 ff.), is on the west slope of the Shephelah, and has really no point in its favour but its caves. Clermont Ganneau is the discoverer of 'Aid-el-ma. The *Onomasticon* need not be taken into account. It confounds Adullam and Eglon.

[1] 1 Sam. xxiii.

[2] The site Khurbet Kela was proposed by Guérin, *Jud.* iii. 341. In Josh. xv. 43, 44, it is mentioned with Nesib, and this is probably the neighbouring Beit-Nasib. It is mentioned in the *Tell-el-Amarna Tablets*, Conder, pp. 143, 144, 151-155, and Nasib 157. It is practically on the Shephelah (this against Dillmann). The *Onomasticon* confounds, and puts Κεειλά on Hebron and Beit-Jibrin road at seven (or seventeen) miles from Hebron. This is evidently Beit-Kahil, which is not in the Shephelah, but on the mountains of Judah.

that now named the Wady el 'Afranj, which runs from opposite Hebron north-west to Ashdod and the coast. It is important as containing the real capital of the Shephelah, the present Beit-Jibrin.[1] This site has not been identified with any Old Testament name,[2] but, like so many other places in Palestine, its permanent importance is illustrated by its use during Roman times, and especially during the Crusades. It is not a place of any natural strength, and this is perhaps why we hear nothing of it, so far as we know, during the older history; but it is the converging point of many roads, and the soft chalk of the district lends itself admirably to the hewing of intricate caves—two facts which fully account for its later importance. Indeed, these caves have been claimed as proof that the Horites, or cave-dwellers, of the early history of Israel, had their centre here,[3] but none of them bear any mark older than the Christian era. The first possible mention of Beit-Jibrin is in an amended passage of Josephus, where he describes it as a stronghold of the Idumæans, who overran the Shephelah in the last centuries before Christ, and as taken by Vespasian when he was blockading the approaches to Jerusalem.[4] The Romans built roads from it in all directions,

Wady el 'Afranj.

Beit-Jibrin.

[1] Ptolemy, xv. 'Betogabra;' Tab. Peut. 'Betogubri.' Nestle, *Z.D.P.V.* i. 222-225, takes it to be the Aramaic בית גברא—'House of the Men,' or 'Strong Men'—and shows its identity with Eleutheropolis from a Syrian MS. of the third century. Robinson, *B.R.* ii. 61, had already put this past doubt. In the same paper Nestle, on good grounds, places Elkosh, the birthplace of Nahum, close by.

[2] Thomson, *L. and B.*, proposes it as the site of Gath, but see p. 194 f.

[3] *Talm. Bereshith Rabba*, xlii. describes Eleutheropolis as inhabited by Horites, and derives the name Free-town from the fact that the Horim chose these caves that they might dwell there in liberty! So also Jerome, *Comm. in Obadiam.*

[4] iv. *Wars*, viii. 1, by reading βηγαβρις for βηταρις.

the high straight lines of which still dominate the brushwood and corn-fields of the neighbouring valleys. About 200 A.D. Septimius Severus refounded it, and its name was changed to Eleutheropolis.[1] It was the centre of the district, the half-way house between Jerusalem and Gaza, Hebron and Lydda, and the *Onomasticon* measures from it all distances in the Shephelah.

Many times, as our horses' hoofs strike pavement on the Roman roads of Palestine, and we lift our eyes to the unmistakable line across the landscape, we pilgrims from the far north are reminded that these same straight lines cross our own island, that by our own doors milestones have been dug up similar to those which lie here, and we are thrilled with some imagination of what the Roman Empire was, and how it grasped the world. But by Beit-Jibrin this feeling grows still more intense, for the Roman buildings there are mostly the work of the same emperor who built the wall on the Tyne, and hewed his way through Scotland to the shores of the Pentland Firth.

Roman Roads.

There are early Christian remains at Beit-Jibrin, both caves and churches, but we shall take them up afterwards in speaking of the rise of Christianity throughout the Shephelah. The Crusaders came to Beit-Jibrin, or Gibelin as they called it, and thought it was Beersheba.[2] They made it their base against Askalon, and Fulke of Anjou built the citadel. It was in charge of the Knights of St. John, and they attempted to colonise

Beit-Jibrin and the Crusades.

[1] The date is fixed by the earliest coins of the city, with its new name and the name of Severus, of the years 202, 203 A.D.

[2] Gibelin, also Begibelinum and Bersabe Judæae. Röhricht, *Z.D.P.V.* x. 240.

the neighbourhood in 1168.[1] The monuments they have left are some ruins of a beautiful Gothic church, some thick fortifications, and their name in the Wady el 'Afranj, or 'Valley of the Franks.'

Mareshah.

Not two miles from Beit-Jibrin lies Mer'ash, the Mareshah or Moresheth-gath of the Old Testament,[2] and birthplace of the prophets Eliezer and Micah. In the reign of Asa an army of Ethiopians, under Zerah, came up this avenue through the Shephelah, but by Mareshah Asa defeated them, and pursued them to Gerar.[3] In 163 B.C. Judas Maccabeus laid Mareshah waste in his campaign against the Idumæans.[4] John Hyrcanus took it again from their hands in 110, and Pompey gave it back to them.[5] Mareshah was one of the towns Gabinius rebuilt, but the Parthians, in 40 B.C., swept down on it,[6] and thereafter we hear no more of it till Eusebius tells us it is desert.[7] Thus it was an important and 'a powerful town'[8] as long as Beit-Jibrin was unheard of; when Beit-Jibrin comes into history, it disappears. Can we doubt that we have here one of those frequent instances of the transference of a community to a new and neighbouring site? If this be so, we have now full explanation of the silence of the Old Testament about Beit-Jibrin; it was really represented by Mareshah.

[1] Will. of Tyre, xiv. 22. On the colony see Prutz, *Z.D.P.V.* iv. 113.

[2] Josh. xv. 44; 2 Chron. xi. 8; xiv. 9, 10; xx. 37; Micah i. 1, 15; Jer. xxvi. 18; 2 Macc. xii. 35. But see Additional Notes to Fourth Edition.

[3] 2 Chron. xiv. 9 ff. The Massoretic Text places the battle in the Valley of Ṣephathah (גי צפתה) at Mareshah, LXX. gives north of Mareshah. Robinson, *Bib. Res.* ii. 31, compares Ṣephathah with Tell-es-Sâfiyeh.

[4] 163 B.C., as he went from Hebron to Ashdod, Josephus xii. *Antt.* viii. 6. In 1 Macc. v. 66, read Μάρισσα for Σαμαρεία.

[5] Josephus, xiii. *Antt.* ix. 1; xiv. *Antt.* iv. 4.

[6] *Ib.* xiii. 9.

[7] *Onom.* Μάρισα.

[8] So Josephus.

5. The last of the valleys through the Shephelah is Wady el Hesy, or Wady el Jizâir, running from a point about six miles south-west of Hebron to the sea, between Gaza and Askalon. This valley also has its important sites; for Lachish, which used to be placed at Umm Lakis, on the slopes to the south, is now, by the English survey and excavations, proved to have been Tell el Hesy, a mound in the bed of the valley, and Eglon—the present 'Ajlan—is not far off. These two were very ancient Amorite fortresses. Eglon disappeared from history at an early period, but Lachish endured, always fulfilling the same function, time after time suffering the same fate. Her valley is the first in the Shephelah which the roads from Egypt strike, and Gaza stands at its lower end. Lachish has therefore throughout history played second to Gaza, now an outpost of Egypt, and now a frontier fortress of Syria. In the Tell-el-Amarna Letters we read of her in Egyptian hands. She is the farthest city Egyptwards which Rehoboam fortifies.[1] Sennacherib must take her before he invades Egypt.[2] During the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem, her successor at Umm Lakis is held by the Order of the Hospitallers,[3] for the same strategical reasons.[4] Again, some five miles above Lachish, at the Wells of Qassâba, or 'the Reeds,' there is usually wealth of water, and all the year round a stream. Latin chronicles of the Crusades know the place as Cannetum Esturnellorum, or 'the Cane-

Wady el Hesy.

Lachish.

[1] 2 Chron. xi. 9.

[2] 2 Kings xviii. 14, 17; xix. 8; Isa. xxxvi. 2; xxxvii. 8; 2 Chron. xxxii. 9.

[3] Their name for Lachish, Malagues or Malaques (cf. Röhricht, *Z.D.P.V.* x. 239)—that is, Umm Lakis—is a good instance of what the unfortunate names of this country have suffered at the mouths of its conquerors.

[4] On Lachish excavated see Petrie, *Tell el Hesy*, 1891; Bliss, *P.E.F.Q.* 1892 f.

brake of the Starlings:' and Richard twice made it a base of operations—once on coming up the Wady el Hesy from the coast, when he advanced on Beit-Jibrin, and once again when he came south to intercept, in the Wady esh Sheria, a rich caravan on its way from Egypt.[1] Through all these ages, then, Lachish was an outpost, and, as we should now say, a customs-station, between Judæa and Egypt. War and commerce both swept past her. But this enables us to understand her neighbour Micah's word about her. In his day Judah's *sin* was to lean on Egypt, to accept Egyptian subsidies of horses and chariots. So Micah mocks Lachish, playing on the assonance of her name to that for a horse: *Yoke the wagon to the steed, O inhabitress of Lachish; beginning of sin is she to the daughter of Zion, for in thee are found the transgressions of Israel.*[2]

I have now explained the strategic importance of the Shephelah, and especially of the five valleys which are the only possibilities of passage through it for great armies. How much of the history of all these centuries can be placed along one or other of them; and, when we have placed it, how much more vivid that history becomes!

Sennacherib in the Shephelah.

There is one great campaign in the Shephelah which we have not discussed in connection with any of the main routes, because the details of it are obscure—Sennacherib's invasion of Syria in 701 B.C. But the general course of this, as told in the Assyrian annals and in the Bible, becomes plain in the light of the geography we have been studying. Sennacherib, coming down the coast, like the Syrians and

[1] Vinsauf, *Itin. Ricard*, v. 41; vi. 4. On the identification of Qassâba with the Cannetum Esturnellorum, see Clermont Ganneau, *Recueil*, etc., 378.
[2] Micah i. 13.

Crusaders, like them also conquered first the towns about Joppa. Then he defeated an Egyptian army before Alteku, somewhere near Ekron, on the Philistine Plain,[1] and took Ekron and Timnah. With Egypt beaten back, and the Northern Shephelah mastered, his way was now open into Judah, the invasion of which and the investment of Jerusalem accordingly appear next in the list of Sennacherib's triumphs. These must have been effected by a detachment of the Assyrian army, for Sennacherib himself is next heard of in the Southern Shephelah, besieging Lachish and Libnah, no doubt with the view of securing his way to Egypt. At Lachish he received the tribute of Hezekiah, who thus hoped to purchase the relief of the still inviolate Jerusalem; but, in spite of the tribute, he sent to Hezekiah from Lachish and Libnah two peremptory demands for her surrender. Then suddenly, in the moment of Zion's despair, the Assyrian army was smitten, not, as we usually imagine, round the walls of Jerusalem, for the Bible nowhere implies that, but under Sennacherib himself in the main camp and headquarters. Either these were still in the Southern Shephelah—for Sennacherib's own annals do not carry him south of Lachish, and Egypt often sent her plagues up this way to Palestine[2]—or, if we may believe Herodotus, they had crossed the desert to Pelusium, and were overtaken in that pestiferous region, which has destroyed so many armies.[3]

[1] Alteku, the Eltekeh of Josh. xix. 44, cannot be where the P.E.F. Red. Map (1891) makes it, at Beit-Likea, far up Ajalon—for how could an Egyptian and Assyrian army have met there?—but was near Ekron, on the road to Egypt. Here Kh. Lezka is the only modern name like it.

[2] 1 *R.P.* I.; Schrader, *K.A.T.* I. p. 218 ff.; Stade, *Gesch.* i. 620 ff.; *Isaiah, Exp. Bible*, I. chaps. xix. to xxiii. Schrader wrongly makes the crisis at the battle of Eltekeh.

[3] See p. 158 f.

CHAPTER XI

EARLY CHRISTIANITY IN THE SHEPHELAH: ITS CAVES AND CHURCHES



For this Chapter consult Map IV.

EARLY CHRISTIANITY IN THE SHEPHELAH: ITS CAVES AND CHURCHES

OUR study of the Shephelah has covered only the campaigns and battles which have ranged over its very debatable ground. But the region had its victories of peace as well as of war, and throughout it you find to-day ruins of cloisters and of churches, and caves with Christian symbols. Many of the former are, no doubt, ruins of Crusaders' buildings; but some go back to the Byzantine period, and the caves with the crosses marked on their walls are probably early Christian. Christianity conquered the Shephelah almost before any other part of Palestine, and the story of the conquest is a heroic one.[1]

Idumæa.

Among the crowds who followed our Lord at the beginning of His ministry were many from Idumæa.[2] Idumæa was then practically the southern Shephelah, with the Negeb. The Edomites had come up on it during the Jewish exile, and after the return of the Jews they continued to hold the greater part of it. Judas Maccabeus temporarily conquered their territory,[3] but John Hyrcanus brought them under the law and circumcised them.[4] By the Law the third generation

[1] It is told in the histories of Eusebius, Socrates and Sozomen, in Jerome's Letters, and in his *Life of Hilarion*. Stark's *Gaza, etc.*, § 16, takes it up at points.

[2] Mark iii. 8.

[3] See p. 233.

[4] About 125 B.C. Josephus xiii. *Antt.* ix. 1; i. *Wars* ii. 6.

of Edomites were admitted to the full privileges of Israel,[1] so that in our Lord's time Idumæa was practically a part of Judæa, with a Jewish population.[2] Many out of Idumæa heard Him, and it is probable that Idumæans were present on the day of Pentecost. Apostles and evangelists went down into the Shephelah. Peter we have seen at Lydda, and from the Christians at Lydda, influences might easily pass across the whole region by the high-road to Beit-Jibrin. Philip met the Ethiopian somewhere in the southern Shephelah, and was afterwards found at Ashdod.[3] Very early, then, little communities of Christians must have been formed among these beautiful glens and moors. Tradition assigns one of the Twelve, Simon Judas, to Beit-Jibrin.[4] When times of persecution came, we can understand how readily this land of caves, where David and his men had hid themselves from Saul, would be used by Christian fugitives from the Greek cities of the coast. The habits of the ascetic life also spread here from Egypt. Monks and hermits settled first to the south of Gaza,[5] then came up the Wady el Hesy to the district round Beit-Jibrin, and found among the villages of the Shephelah a far nobler work to do than their brother monks of the Libyan and Arabian deserts. With a persistence and success, the proof of which appeared in the aid rendered by the country districts to the Christians of the cities in the struggles of the fourth century, they converted the peasants and built them up in the faith. Here the contrast

The Apostles in the Shephelah.

[1] Deut. xxiii. 8, 9 (Heb. but Eng. Version, 7, 8).

[2] How violently Jewish may be seen from the part they took to themselves in the Jewish revolt of 66 A.D.—Jos. iv. *Wars*, iv. 4.

[3] Acts viii. 39.

[4] Stark's *Gaza, etc.*, p. 613—after the *De LXX. Domini discipulis.*

[5] Jerome's *Life of Hilarion.*

which was seen all over the rest of the world was reversed, and 'urban' might have been taken as the synonym of idolater, but 'heathen' and 'pagan' as the by-names of the Christians. Even so early as the Decian persecutions, and still more in those which the Church suffered under Diocletian and Maximin, many confessors were brought in 'from the country' to martyrdom at Cæsarea, or sent back to their glens mutilated and branded.[1] Some have been named for us.

The Martyrs of the Shephelah.

Romulus, a sub-deacon of the Church at Lydda, was one of six young men who, first binding their hands, went to the amphitheatre of Cæsarea, where some of their brethren were being thrown to the beasts, and boldly declared themselves to the governor as Christians.[2] They were beheaded. Zebina of Beit-Jibrin was one of three who defied the Governor of Cæsarea, when he was sacrificing to idols. They were executed.[3] Petrus Asketes, a youth from Anea in the borders of Beit-Jibrin, was burned to death in the same city.[4] The Shephelah lay at the very doors of that slaughter-house, into which the fury of Maximin had converted the whole Syrian coast from Egypt to Cilicia; and during the eight[5] years of the great persecution its Christian communities must have been constantly thrilled by the stories of heroism, martyrdom, and miracle which came up to them from the seaboard. Lying in caves, the mouths of many of which look out over the plain upon Gaza and Askalon, they were told how the gates of these cities were beset by spies, and Christians were caught as they came in from the country or were travelling between Cilicia and Egypt; how some

[1] Euseb. *H.E.* viii. *passim*. [2] *Ib.* 3. [3] *Ib.* 9.
[4] *Ib.* 10. [5] So *ib.* 13; but 'ten years,' *ib.* 15.

were found in the towns reading the Scriptures, and dragged before the prefect; how some were burned, and all were tortured; how some were thrown to the wild beasts, and some were trained for pugilistic combats to make a Roman holiday; how human heads and limbs were sometimes scattered about the gates to terrify the peasants as they came in; and how a strange dew once broke out on all the buildings of Cæsarea, and people said that the very stones must weep at cruelties so terrible. And men wanting a foot, or a hand, or an eye, or seared across the face, or with their sides torn by hooks, would come up to these caves to die; and some country youths, emulous of martyrdom, would rush off to Cæsarea and defy the governor himself in the great theatre. These things are told by Eusebius, who lived through them, and is a sober and accurate writer.[1]

The Caves of Beit-Jibrin.

The most intricate caves of the Shephelah are those about Beit-Jibrin—that is, the very district of whose Christianity we hear most. The yellow chalk of the ridges there is easy to carve, and hardens on exposure. Some of the old caves, which had probably been used from time immemorial,[2] must have lately been enlarged as quarries for the building of Eleutheropolis; others had been used by the Jews as tombs. But by the Christians they were greatly increased. There is in them, as they now lie, no such wealth of inscriptions as in the Roman catacombs, but that their present form is due to the early Christians seems proved by these facts: that the chambers have in many cases been run through Jewish tombs;[3] that almost the only ornament is the Cross, and that the only Moslem

[1] *History*, Bk. viii., cf. Theodoret iii. 7; Evagrius i. 21, etc.

[2] See p. 231.

[3] *P.E.F. Mem.* Judæa, 268.

inscriptions yet discovered are very early ones in the Cufic character.[1] A few notes, taken on the spot, will perhaps give a vivid idea of the caves about Beit-Jibrin :—

'. . . Down a steep grass gully to some rough steps—evidently not the original entrance, but one broken by the fall of the rock—and so, lighting our candles, into a large chamber. Thence we crept, by a passage as high as my walking-stick, to a larger room, of elegant shape, with a pillar in the centre, 2 ft. thick each way. Climbing to the top of some rubbish, we found a hole in the wall, and passed through into a great bell-shaped chamber, round which there descended a spiral staircase with a balustrade. We went down to the bottom, 50 steps. Returning, half-way up we found a door into another series of chambers, which we penetrated for about 200 feet; they went on further. We came back to the staircase, and passed by it out of the solid rock into a narrow vaulted passage choked with rubbish, at what seemed to be the proper entrance to the labyrinth.'

This describes but a part of one series of caves in one district. Elsewhere round Beit-Jibrin there are other series, in which you may wander for hours through cells, rooms, and pillared halls with staircases and long corridors, all cut out of the soft yellow chalk. There is almost no ornament, nor trace of ornament having been removed. Where the walls are preserved, they have no breaks in them save niches for holding little lamps. The low passages, along which you have to creep, suggest their origin in times of terror; and the natural mouths of many, hidden by bush, and overlooking all the plain to the sea, are splendid posts of observation for the sentinels of hunted men. But the vaulted masonry of other entrances speaks of more peaceful days; and all the chambers are dry, and in summer delightfully cool. While,

[1] Robinson (and Eli Smith), *B.R.* ii. Guérin, *Jud.* ii.

then, some of these caves about Beit-Jibrin may have been inhabited, or even first formed, during the great persecutions, the bulk of them are probably due to the monks and hermits who came up here from Egypt. The caves at Deir-Dubban, to the north of Beit-Jibrin, have also a few crosses, and what look like Cufic inscriptions high up on the walls. They, too, therefore, are to be assigned to the Byzantine period.[1]

Deir-Dubban.

When the Christianity of the Shephelah came above ground again, it built some noble churches. Close by the caves just described stands the ruin Sandhanneh, the Church of Sancta Anna, mother of the Virgin. It is the east end of a Greek basilica, and with the foundations, which can still be traced for the rest of the building, implies a church as great and beautiful as the Basilica of Justinian in Bethlehem. It probably dates from the same age, when the famous Marcian, who built the churches of Gaza, was bishop there, and his brother was Bishop of Eleutheropolis.[2] Byzantine remains have been recognised in other parts of the Shephelah, as at Deir-el-Bedawiyeh, Deir-el-Botum, and Deir-el-Mohallis or Convent of the Saviour.[3] Some of the untraceable ruins, which are so thickly strewn across these hills, must belong to the same period; but other ecclesiastical remains, such as the chapel within the citadel at Beit-Jibrin, are French architecture of the thirteenth century, and the scattered stones to the north of Tell Jezer are also, we know, the work of the Crusaders.[4]

The Churches of the Shephelah.

[1] Guérin, *Jud.* ii. 105, 106.
[2] Stark, *Gaza, etc.*, p. 625.
[3] Guérin, *Jud.* ii. 27, 97, 98.
[4] See p. 217.

CHAPTER XII

JUDÆA AND SAMARIA—THE HISTORY OF THEIR FRONTIER



For this Chapter consult Map V.

JUDÆA AND SAMARIA—THE HISTORY OF THEIR FRONTIER

OVER the Shephelah we advance upon the Central Range. Our nearest goal is that part of the range which is called the *Hill-country*, or *Mount, of Judah*. But it is necessary first to look at the range as a whole, and see how, and why, its short extent was divided first into the two kingdoms of Northern Israel and Judah, and then into the provinces of Samaria and Judæa.

The Central Range south of Esdraelon.

We have seen [1] that a long, deep formation of limestone extends all the way from Lebanon in the north to a line of cliffs opposite the Gulf and Canal of Suez in the south. Of this backbone of Syria the part between Esdraelon and the Negeb is historically the most famous. Those ninety miles of narrow highland from Jezreel to Beersheba were the chief theatre of the history of Israel. As you look from the sea they form a persistent mountain wall of nearly uniform level, rising clear and blue above the low hills which buttress it to the west. The one sign of a pass across it is the cleft we have already noticed,[2] between Ebal and Gerizim, in which Shechem, the natural capital of these highlands, lies.

But uniform as that persistent range appears from the

[1] P. 47. [2] P. 119.

coast, almost the first thing you remember as you look at it is the prolonged political and religious division of which it was capable—first into the kingdoms of Northern Israel and Judah, and then into the provinces of Samaria and Judæa. Those ninety narrow miles sustained the arch-schism of history. Where did the line of this schism run? Did it correspond to any natural division in the range itself?

Its division.

A closer observation shows that there was a natural boundary between northern and southern Israel. But its ambiguity is a curious symbol of the uncertain frontier of their religious differences.

Three natural frontiers.

We have seen, *first*, that the bulk of Samaria consists of scattered mountain groups, while Judæa is a table-land; and, *secondly*, that while the Samarian mountains descend continuously through the low hills upon the Maritime Plain, the hill-country of Judæa stands aloof from the Shephelah Range, with a well-defined valley between.[1] Now, these two physical differences do not coincide: the table-land of Judæa runs farther north than its isolation from the low hills. Consequently, we have an alternative of frontiers. If we take the difference between the relations of the two provinces to the Maritime Plain, the natural boundary will be the Vale of Ajalon, which penetrates the Central Range, and a line from it across the water-parting to the Wady Suweinit, the deep gorge of Michmash, which will continue the boundary to the Jordan at Jericho. If we take the distinction between the scattered hills and the table-land, then the natural boundary from the coast eastwards to the Jordan will be the river 'Aujeh, the Wady Deir Balût, the

[1] See p. 205 f.

Wady Nimr, a line across the water-parting to the Wady Samieh, and so down this and the Wady 'Aujeh to the Jordan, eight miles above Jericho.[1] For it is just where this line crosses the water-parting, about the Robber's Well on the high-road from Jerusalem to Nâblus, that travellers coming north find the country change. They have descended from the plateau, and their road onward lies through valleys and plains, with ridges between. This second natural border is easily remembered by the fact that it begins and ends with streams of the same name—'Aujeh, 'the crooked'—and that, while the western stream reaches the sea a little above Joppa, the eastern falls into the Jordan a little above Jericho. Somewhat farther north, however, than this second line, there is a third and even more evident border, which leaves the Wady Deir Balût by the Wady Ishar, and runs north-east, deep and straight to 'Akrabbeh. Still farther north there is a fourth line, which leaves the western 'Aujeh by the Wadies Ishar and Kânah—the latter probably the Brook Ḳanah, the frontier between Ephraim and Manasseh—but this fourth line we need not take into our reckoning.

Thus we have not one, but three possible frontiers across the range: south of Bethel, the line from the head of Ajalon to the gorge of Michmash; north of Bethel, the change from table-land to valley, with deep wadies running both to Jordan and to the coast; and, more northerly still, the Wady Ishar. None of these is by any means a 'scientific frontier,' and their ambiguity is reflected in the fortunes of the political border.

The political border oscillated among these natural borders.

[1] Trel. Saunders, *Introd. to Survey of W. Palestine*, p. 229.

Take the most southerly—the line up the Wady Suweinit, across the plateau south of Bethel, and down Ajalon. This was a real pass across the range. Not only did Israel by it first come up from the Jordan on to the table-land, and by it sweep down towards the sea, but it was in all ages a regular route for trade.[1] Its use, and the close connection into which it brought the Maritime Plain with the Jordan Valley, could not be more clearly proved than by the presence of the name Dagon at its eastern as well as its western end. A little way north of Jericho there was, down to the times of the Maccabees, a fortress called by the name of the Philistine god.[2] In Saul's days the Philistines were naturally anxious to hold this route, and, invading Israel by Ephraim, they planted their garrisons upon its northern side at Ramallah[3] and Michmash, while Saul's forces faced them from its southern side.[4] This is the earliest appearance of this natural border across the Central Range in the character of a political frontier. The next is a few years later: while David was king only of Judah, his soldiers sat down opposite those of Abner at Gibeon,[5] on a line between Ajalon and Michmash. After the disruption the same line seems to have been the usual frontier between the kingdoms of Northern Israel and Judah; for Bethel,[6] to

Earliest political frontier.

[1] The Crusaders used it. See p. 183.

[2] Josephus, xiii. *Antt.* viii. It is probably the same as Docus (1 Macc. xvi. 15), which name is preserved in 'Ain Dûk, to the north of Jericho.

[3] 1 Samuel x. 5. *The hill of God* is probably the present Ramallah, south-west of Bethel.

[4] 1 Samuel xiii. xiv. Seneh, so called from the *thorns* upon it (Jos. *vide* i. *Wars*, ii. 1), lay on the south side of the Michmash gorge. Bozez, *the shining*, for it lay facing the south, was opposite to Seneh on the north.

[5] 2 Samuel ii. 13.

[6] 1 Kings xii. 29, 2 Kings x. 29; Amos iii. 14, iv. 4, vii. 10, 13; Hosea x. 15.

the north of it, was a sanctuary of Israel, and Geba, to the south of it, was considered as the limit of Judah.[1] But though the Vale of Ajalon and the gorge of Michmash form such a real division down both flanks of the plateau, the plateau itself between these offers no real frontier, but stretches level from Jerusalem to the north of Bethel. Consequently we find Judah and Israel pushing each other up and down on it, Israel trying to get footing south, and Judah trying to get footing north, of Michmash. For instance, Baasha, king of Israel, *went up against Judah, and built*, or *fortified*, *Ramah*, the present er-Ram, four miles north of Jerusalem, *that he might not suffer any to go out or come in to Asa, king of Judah*;[2] but, Asa having paid the Syrians to invade Israel from the north, *he left off building Ramah*, and Asa made a levy throughout Judah, *and they took away the stones and timber of Ramah wherewith Baasha had builded, and King Asa built*, or *fortified*, *with them Geba of Benjamin and Mizpeh.*[3] And conversely to Baasha's attempt on Ramah we find the kings of Judah making attempts on Bethel. Soon after the disruption, Abijah won it for Judah,[4] but it must have quickly reverted to the north. Similarly to the Bethel plateau, the Jordan valley offered no real frontier between Judah and Northern Israel, and consequently we find Jericho, though a Judæan city, in possession of the northerners.[5] On the west, Northern Israel did not come south of the Vale of Ajalon, for in that direction the Philistines were still strong.[6]

[1] The formula, *from Dan to Beersheba*, which meant united Israel, seems to have been replaced by the formula, *from Geba to Beersheba* (2 Kings xxiii. 8; cf. 1 Kings xv. 22).

[2] 1 Kings xv. 17.

[3] *Ibid.* 21, 22.

[4] 2 Chronicles xiii. 19.

[5] 1 Kings xvi. 34, 2 Kings ii. 4 ff.

[6] 1 Kings xvi. 15 ff., where we find Gibbethon, on the borders of Ephraim, to the north of Ajalon, in Philistine possession.

When the kingdom of Northern Israel fell, Jericho and Bethel both reverted to Judah; but Bethel was a tainted place, and Josiah destroyed it,[1] and still in his time Geba was the formal limit of Judah.[2] Only formal, however, for Bethel and other villages to the north must have been rebuilt and occupied by Jews. Men of Bethel returned in Zerubbabel's company from exile along with men of Ai, Michmash, Gibeon, Anathoth, Azmaveth, Beeroth, Ramah, and Geba,[3] on the plateau; Lydda, Hadid, and Ono in Ajalon; and Jericho and Senaah[4] in the Jordan Valley. All these are either upon or south of the line from Michmash to Ajalon, except Bethel, which is a little to the north. It is to be noted that Beth-horon, which was also on the line, but belonged to Ephraim,[5] is not mentioned among them. All this proves that, after the northern kingdom fell, Judah had only slightly pushed her frontier northwards. She got Jericho back, and a little place to the north of it, and Bethel, but she did not get Beth-horon.

The Frontier from 721 B.C. to the Exile.

Except, then, for the northward bulge at Bethel, the political frontier between Judah and Israel was down to the Exile the most southerly of the three natural borders.

During the Exile the Samaritans must have flowed south into the vacant or weakened Jewish cities, but the only evidence we have of this concerns Lod, or Lydda, and its neighbourhood. Long after Lod's reoccupation by the Jews, the district was still nominally a Samaritan

[1] 2 Kings xxiii. 4, 15.
[2] *Ibid.* 8.
[3] Ezra ii. 20 ff., Neh. vii. 25 ff.
[4] Probably five miles north of Jericho; cf. *Onom.*, Megdalsenna.
[5] Joshua xvi. 3, 5, xxi. 22.

toparchy.[1] When the Jews returned they found the frontier obliterated; their countrymen who had not gone into exile were fallen into idolatrous practices, and the Samaritans came up to Jerusalem itself and offered to join them in building the Temple. The offer was rejected; but after the Temple was finished in 516, the Jewish exclusiveness gave way, and such intercourse was held with the Samaritans, by marriage and other relations, as must have scattered many Jews northwards across the old frontier.[2] Then under Ezra and Nehemiah (460-432), when the Samaritans were again excluded, they seem to have overthrown the walls of Jerusalem, and at the rebuilding of these they appeared in force.[3] All this time it is evident there was no real frontier north of Jerusalem. Soon after, as Nehemiah intimates, the Jews were again settled in the frontier towns of Geba, Michmash, Aija, Beth-el, Ramah, and down Ajalon in Hadid, Lydda, and Ono, and even at Neballat, to the north-west of Lydda.[4]

After the Exile.

[1] Lydda was a Samaritan *νομός* up to the time of Jonathan Maccabeus (about 145 B.C.), 1 Macc. xi. 34, Josephus xiii. *Antt.* iv. 9. Another proof that the neighbourhood of Lydda is Samaritan is found in the fact that Sanballat asks Nehemiah to meet him there (Neh. vi. 2).

[2] Ezra ix. 2; Neh. xiii. 23 ff., especially 28.

[3] Neh. iv. 2, either in the Massoretic or the LXX. reading, which latter, to my mind, makes the better sense: *Is this the power of Samaria, that these Jews can build their city?* But see Ryle, *in loco* (*Camb. Bible for Schools*); he thinks LXX. fails to throw any light.

[4] Neh. xi. 31-36. The other towns north of Jerusalem which are mentioned are Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah (Beit Hanina), Hazor (Hazzûr), all near Jerusalem; Gittaim and Zeboim, unknown. Schlatter (*Zur Topog. u. Gesch. Palästinas,* 53) has tried to prove that this list refers to pre-exilic times, and is out of date in Nehemiah. He holds Neh. xi. is taken from 1 Chron. ix., which belongs to the Books of the Kings of Judah. But, in consistency with his usual method of special pleading, he omits to say that the very verses he is dealing with in Neh. xi., viz. 25 ff., do *not* appear in the document on 1 Chron. ix., which invalidates his whole argument. There is no reason to believe that Neh. xi. 25 ff. is not

As before the Exile, Beth-horon is not mentioned among the Jewish towns; and Sanballat, the Samaritan, is called the Horonite.[1] For one hundred and sixty years we hear no more of the frontier, except that in a time of the Jews' distress the Samaritans cut off their lands;[2] and then under Judas Maccabeus Beth-horon is suddenly mentioned as a town of Judæa.[3] Proofs multiply that since Nehemiah's time the Jews were pushing steadily northwards. In 161 B.C., Beth-horon, Bethel, and even Timnath Pharatho, in the interior of the old Samarian territory,[4] are described as cities of Judæa.[5] By 145 the Jews demand from the Syrian king the transference of the Samaritan toparchies, Apharema, Lydda, and Ramathaim, to Judæa.[6] Lydda we know, Apharema is the city of Ephraim, five miles north-east of Bethel; the exact site of Ramathaim is doubtful, but it also lay within Mount Ephraim.[7] Taken along with the capture of Joppa, which happened about the same time, this addition of Samarian

Under the Maccabees.

authentic; while the Jewish occupation of at least Lod and Ono is put past all doubt by their later history. None of those who helped Nehemiah in building the walls came from the north of Gibeon, Meronoth (?), Mizpeh (Neh. iii.).

[1] Schlatter (*op. cit.* 4, *War Beth-horon der Wohnort Sanballat's* ?) seeks to prove, but without success, that Sanballat was neither a Samaritan nor of Beth-horon.

[2] Josephus xii. *Antt.* iv. 1.

[3] *Id.* vii. 1. That this is not an anachronism on Josephus' part is seen from xiii. *Antt.* i. 3.

[4] On any theory as to its site, see p. 355.

[5] 1 Macc. ix. 50; Josephus xiii. *Antt.* i. 3.

[6] 1 Macc. xi. 28, 34; Josephus xiii. *Antt.* iv. 9.

[7] On the city of Ephraim, see p. 352. Ramathaim, Ῥαμαθέμ, is doubtless the Ramathaim or Ramah which was Samuel's city in Mount Ephraim (1 Samuel i. 1; other passages in which it is mentioned in 1 Samuel throw no light on its position). It has been identified with Beit-Rima, thirteen miles north-east of Lydda, which agrees with the description in the *Onomasticon*, art. Ἀρμαθέμ Σειφά, where it is identified with the Arimathea of Joseph.

territory shifted the frontier of Judæa to the line of the 'Aujeh and Wady Deir Ballût, or the second of the three natural borders.[1] John Hyrcanus (135-105) overran Samaria; in 64 Pompey separated it again;[2] in 30 it fell to Herod the Great; in 6 A.D. it was taken with Judæa from Archelaus, and put under a Roman procurator.[3] In 41 Claudius gave it, with Judæa, to Agrippa. During all that time, therefore, there was no real political frontier between Judæa and Samaria. The great religious difference, however, kept them apart as much as ever, and the necessity which was felt by the scrupulous Judaism of the time to distinguish heathen from holy soil ensured a strict drawing of their frontier. Josephus[4] puts the boundary at the Acrabbene toparchy, and again at the 'village Anuath, which is also named Borkeos,' and the English Survey have identified these with Burkit and Akrabbeh.[5] This gives the frontier along the most northerly of the natural borders, the Wady Ishar. On the Maritime Plain the Jewish Judæa ceased at the 'Aujeh,[6] though, of course, the Roman province of Judæa covered the plain to the north of that, as it covered Samaria, and indeed had its chief town there in Cæsarea. On the eastern side, again, the border between Samaria

Under the Romans.

[1] Unless it was that Timnath Pharatho was really Judæan, and lay at the head of the Wady Farah; in that case the frontier was already at the most northerly of the three borders.

[2] Josephus, xiv. *Antt.* iii. 4, speaks of Pompey's arrival at Corea, 'which is the first entrance to Judæa when one passes over the midland countries;' but it is uncertain whether Josephus speaks of his own or Pompey's time, nor are we sure where Corea was. See p. 353.

[3] Samaritans were enrolled in the Roman forces, and probably formed part of the garrison in Jerusalem. See Schürer, *Jewish People in the Time of Christ*, i. ii. p. 51.

[4] iii. *Wars*, iii. 4, 5. [5] *P.E.F.Q.* 1881, p. 48. [6] Talmud.

and Judæa probably ran down the Wady Farah to the Jordan, just north of Kurn Surtàbeh.[1] The northern boundary of Samaria was the edge of Esdraelon.

In the time of Christ.

These were practically the limits of Samaria during our Lord's ministry. Samaria extended from the edge of Esdraelon to the Wady Ishar and Wady Farah, and from the Jordan to the edge of the Maritime Plain, where it touched heathen territory. To go through Samaria, therefore, our Lord and His disciples had only some twenty-three miles to cover ;[2] while if they wished to avoid Samaria and all other unclean soil in passing from Galilee to Judæa, they had to cross the Jordan north of Bethshan, come down through the hot Jordan valley, and recross by one of the fords at the Wady Farah, or between this and Jericho.[3] *The city of Ephraim*, to which our Lord retired, was, and had been since the times of Jonathan Maccabeus, a city of Judæa.[4]

[1] Conder, *Handbook*, 310, 311. Talmud (Bab. Guittin, 76*a*) counts all heathen soil between Kefr Outheni, on the edge of Esdraelon, and Antipatris.

[2] That is, by the present highroad from the Wady Ishar, past Sychar tc Jenîn or Engannim ; cf. Luke ix., John iv. See also Josephus, xx. *Antt* vi. 1, for a quarrel between Galilean pilgrims and Samaritans.

[3] Cf. Mark x.

[4] John xi. 54.

CHAPTER XIII

THE BORDERS AND BULWARKS OF JUDÆA

For this Chapter consult Maps I. and IV.

THE BORDERS AND BULWARKS OF JUDÆA

WE now reach the stronghold and sanctuary of the land, Judæa, physically the most barren and awkward, morally the most potential and famous of all the provinces of Syria. Like her annual harvests, the historical forces of Judæa have always ripened a little later than those of Samaria. She had no part in Israel's earliest struggles for unity and freedom—indeed, in the record of these she is named only as a traitor [1]—nor did the beginnings either of the kinghood or of prophecy spring from her. Yet the gifts which her older sister's more open hands were the first to catch—and lose, were by her redeemed, nourished and consummated. For this more slow and stubborn function Judæa was prepared by her isolated and unattractive position, which kept her for a longer time than her sister out of the world's regard, and, when the world came, enabled her to offer a more hardy defence. Hence, too, sprang the defects of her virtues—her selfishness, provincialism and bigotry. With a few exceptions, due to the genius of some of her sons, who were inspired beyond all other Israelites, Judæa's character and history may be summed up in a sentence. At all times in which the powers of spiritual initiative or expansion were needed, she was lacking, and so in the end

The Seclusion of Judæa.

[1] Deborah's Song does not mention Judah. It was men of Judah who betrayed Samson to the Philistines.

came her shame. But when the times required concentration, indifference to the world, loyalty to the past, and passionate patriotism, then Judæa took the lead, or stood alone in Israel, and these virtues even rendered brilliant the hopeless, insane struggles of her end. Judæa was the seat of the one enduring dynasty of Israel, the site of their temple, the platform of all their chief prophets. After their great Exile they rallied round her capital, and centuries later they expended upon her fortresses the last efforts of their freedom. From the day when the land was taken in pledge by the dust of the patriarchs, till the remnant of the garrison of Jerusalem slaughtered themselves out at Masada, rather than fall into Roman hands, or till at Bether the very last revolt was crushed by Hadrian, Judæa was the birthplace, the stronghold, the sepulchre of God's people. It is, therefore, not wonderful that they should have won from it the name which is now more frequent than either their ancestral designation of Hebrews or their sacred title of Israel.

For us Christians it is enough to remember, besides, that Judæa contains the places of our Lord's Birth and Death, with the scenes of His Temptation, His more painful Ministry, and His Agony.

Her smallness.

Judæa is very small. Even when you extend the surface to the promised border at the sea, and include all of it that is desert, it does not amount to more than 2000 square miles, or the size of one of our average counties.[1] But Judæa, in the days of its independence, never covered the whole Maritime Plain ; and even

[1] Aberdeenshire is 1955 square miles ; Perth, 2528 ; Cumberland, 1516 ; Northumberland, 2015 ; Norfolk, 2017 ; Essex, 1413 ; Kent, 1515 ; Somerset, 1659 ; and Devon, 2015.

the Shephelah, as we have seen, was frequently beyond it. Apart from Shephelah and Plain, Judæa was a region 55 miles long, from Bethel to Beersheba, and from 25 to 30 broad, or about 1350 square miles, of which nearly the half was desert.

It ought not to be difficult to convey an adequate impression of so small and so separate a province. The centre is a high and broken table-land from two to three thousand feet above the sea, perhaps thirty-five miles long by twelve to seventeen broad.[1] You will almost cover it by one sweep of the eye. But surrounding this centre are borders and bulwarks of extraordinary variety and intricacy; and as it is they which have so largely made the history of the land and the culture of its inhabitants, it will be better for us to survey them, before we come to the little featureless plateau, which they so lift and isolate from the rest of the world. We begin with the most important of them—the Eastern.

Her borders.

I. East.—The Great Gulf with Jericho and Engedi. The Entrance of Israel.

You cannot live in Judæa without being daily aware of the presence of the awful deep which bounds it on the east—the lower Jordan Valley and Dead Sea. From Bethel, from Jerusalem, from Bethlehem, from Tekoa, from the heights above Hebron, and from fifty points between, you look down into that deep: and

The Dead Sea Valley.

[1] From the centre of the Wady Ali to the eastern base of the Mount of Olives (1520 feet above the sea) is fourteen miles. From the Wady en Najil on the Shephelah border to the descent from the plateau east of Mar Saba is about seventeen miles; and a line across Hebron from edge to edge of the plateau gives about fourteen miles.

you feel Judæa rising from it about you almost as a sailor feels his narrow deck or a sentinel the sharp-edged platform of his high fortress. From the hard limestone of the range on which you stand, the land sinks swiftly and, as it seems, shuddering through softer formations, desert and chaotic, to a depth of which you cannot see the bottom—but you know that it falls far below the level of the ocean—to the coasts of a bitter sea. Across this emptiness rise the hills of Moab, high and precipitous, and it is their bare edge, almost unbroken, and with nothing visible beyond save a castle or a crag, which forms the eastern horizon of Judæa. The simple name by which that horizon was known to the Jews—The Mountains of the Other-side, or the Mountains of Those-Across [1]—is more expressive than anything else could be of the great vacancy between. The depth, the haggard desert through which the land sinks into it, the singularity of that gulf and its prisoned sea, and the high barrier beyond, conspire to produce on the inhabitants of Judæa a moral effect such as, I suppose, is created by no other frontier in the world.

Judæa and Moab—a contrast.

It was only, however, when we had crossed into Moab that we fully appreciated the significance of that frontier in the history of God's separated people. The table-land to the east of the Dead Sea is about the same height as the table-land of Judæa to the west, and is of almost exactly the same physical formation. On both of them are landscapes from which it would be impossible for you to gather whether you were in Judæa or in Moab—impossible but for one thing, the feeling of what you have to the east of you. To the east of Judæa there is that great gulf fixed. But Moab to the east rolls

[1] הרי עברים or הר.

off imperceptibly to Arabia: a few low hills, and no river or valley, are all that lies between her pastures and the great deserts, out of which, in every age, wild and hungry tribes have been ready to swarm. Moab is open to the east; Judah, or Judæa, with the same formation, and imposing the same habits of life on a kindred stock of men, has a great gulf between herself and the east. In this fact lies a very large part of the reason why she was chosen as the home of God's peculiar people.

Passes through the Wilderness of Judæa.

The Wilderness of Judæa, which is piled up from the beach of the Dead Sea to the very edge of the Central Plateau, may be reserved for later treatment. Here it is only needful to ask what passes break up through it to the centre of the province? The answer is, that passes, strictly so called, do not exist. There are many gorges torn by winter torrents —between Jericho and Jebel Usdum at the south end of the Dead Sea there cannot be fewer than twenty—but all are too narrow and crooked to carry roads. Of real gateways and roads into Judæa there are on this border only five: and these are obviously determined not by lines of valley, but by another feature which in this region is far more indispensable to roads. That is the presence of an oasis. The roads from the east into Judæa have to cross, for from five to eight hours, a waterless desert; it is necessary, therefore, that they start from the few well-watered spots on its eastern edge. There are practically only three of these: Jericho, 'Ain Feshkah, some ten miles south, and 'Ain Jidi, or Engedi, eighteen miles further. From Jericho there start into Judæa three roads, from 'Ain Feshkah one, and from Engedi one.

The roads from Jericho—north-west to Ai and Bethel,

south-west to Jerusalem, and south-south-west to the Lower Kedron and Bethlehem—do not keep to any line of valley; for, as has been said, this flank of Judæa is cut only by deep gorges, but for the most part they follow the ridges between the latter. The most northerly of these three routes into Judæa [1] ascends behind Jericho to the ridge north of the Kelt, follows it to Michmash, and so by Ai to Bethel. This is evidently an ancient road, and was probably the trade route between the Lower Jordan and the coast, both in ancient and mediæval times.[2] It is the line of Israel's first invasion, described in the seventh and eighth chapters of Joshua; and its fitness for that is obvious, for it is open, and leads on to a broad plateau in the centre of the country. The middle route of the three is now the ordinary road from Jerusalem to Jericho. It is impossible to think that an invading army fearing opposition ever attempted its higher end.[3] But it is the shortest road from Jericho to Jerusalem, and therefore the usual pilgrim route in both directions. Pereans and Galileans came up to the Temple by it: it was the path of our Lord and His disciples, when He set *His face steadfastly towards Jerusalem*; and from then till now it has been trodden in the opposite direction by pilgrims from all lands to the scene of His baptism. When taken upwards, a more hot and heavy way it is impossible to conceive—between blistered limestone rocks, and in front the bare hills piled high, without shadow or verdure. There is no

Roads up from Jericho.

[1] More northerly still a road goes up from Jericho by the first pass into the more open Mount Ephraim. Its course is marked by Roman pavement past 'Ain ed Dûk, round Umm Sirah, and up the Wady Taiyibeh to et Taiyibeh, the Biblical city of Ephraim. See p. 352.

[2] See p. 177.

[3] Pompey may have come this way, but more probably approached Jerusalem from the north: Josephus, xiv. *Antt.* iv. 1.

water from Jericho till you reach the roots of the Mount of Olives.[1] Curious red streaks appear from time to time on the stone, and perhaps account for the sanguinary names which attach to the road—the present Red Khan, the Chastel Rouge of the Crusaders, and the Tala'at ed Dumm or Ascent of Blood [2]—but the crimes committed here make these doubly deserved. The surrounding Arabs have always found the pilgrims a profitable prey. The third road [3] from Jericho leaves the 'Arabah about five miles south of Jericho, and, coming up by El Muntâr, crosses the Kedron near Mar Saba. Thence one branch strikes north-west to Jerusalem, and another south-west to Bethlehem; before they separate they are joined by a road from 'Ain Feshkah, the large oasis ten miles south of Jericho, on the Dead Sea coast. We are not certain of any invasion of Judæa by these avenues, unless Judah and Simeon went up by one of them at the first occupation of the land.[4] But one or other was undoubtedly the road by which Naomi brought Ruth, and down which David took his family to the King of Moab.[5] This double connection of Bethlehem with Moab comes back to you as you ride along these roads with the cliffs of Moab in sight. Moab is visible from Bethlehem: when Ruth lifted her eyes from

Road from 'Ain Feshkah.

[1] 'Ain Haud or 'Ain Shems, the Enshemesh of Josh. xv. 7.

[2] Khan el Ahmar, one of the sites for the Inn of the Good Samaritan (St. Luke x. 34). Tala'at ed Dumm is applied to a hill and fortress north-east of the Khan, and to the wady which the road pursues thence towards Jericho. It is doubtless the ancient Ma'aleh Adummîm (Josh. xv. 7, xviii. 17) on the border between Judah and Benjamin. The fortress was the Crusaders' Chastel Rouge (Murray's *Guide* wrongly Tour Rouge, which stood near Cæsarea), or Citerne Rouge, built by the Templars for the succour of pilgrims, and also called la Tour Maledoin. Rey, *Colonies Franques*, 387.

[3] There is really a fourth between our second and third, which passes the Mohammedan place of pilgrimage, Neby Mûsa.

[4] Judges i. 3 ff.

[5] 1 Sam. xxii. 3, 4.

gleaning in the fields of Boaz, she saw her native land over against her.

These roads then debouch from the Judæan hills, and join at a little distance above the end of the Dead Sea.

Fords of Jordan.

Opposite their junction two fords cross the Jordan,[1] which are by no means so easy as the numerous fords opposite Mount Ephraim, yet are passable for most of the year, and on the other side meet highways from Gilead and Moab. A road also comes down the 'Arabah on the west of Jordan, and another from Mount Ephraim by 'Ain ed Dûk.

Follow these roads, passes, and fords to where they meet at the foot of the Judæan hills; observe the streams breaking

Jericho.

from the hill-foot at their junction, and rendering possible an elaborate irrigation. Then, where now but a few hovels and a tower on the edge of a swamp mock your imagination, you will see a strong and stately city rise in the midst of a wonderful fertility of grove and garden. Jericho was the gateway of a province, the emporium of a large trade, the mistress of a great palm forest, woods of balsam, and very rich gardens. To earliest Israel she was the City of Palms;[2] to the latest Jewish historian 'a divine region,' 'fattest of Judæa.'[3] Greeks and Romans spread her fame, with her dates and balsam, all over the world, and great revenue was derived from her.[4] Her year is one long summer; she can soak herself

[1] The Makhadet el Hajlah (near El Hajlah, the ancient Beth-hoglah, Josh. xv. 6, xviii. 19, 21) and the Makh. el Henu.

[2] Deut. xxxiv. 3; Judges i. 16, iii. 13; 2 Chron. xxviii. 15.

[3] Josephus, iv. *Wars*, viii. 3; i. *Wars*, vi. 6. Cf. iv. *Antt.* vi. 1; xiv. *Antt.* iv. 1; xv. *Antt.* iv. 2; i. *Wars*, xviii. 5.

[4] Strabo, xvi. 2. 41. According to this, the palm forest was a hundred stadia. Diod. Siculus, ii. 48. 9; cf. xix. 98. 4. Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* xiii. 4, who says that the finest dates are those of Jericho, and notes that they are grown

in water, and the chemicals with which her soil is charged seem to favour her peculiar products. Like Bethshan, she can make a swamp about her; five miles in front is a river, which, if she oppose, cannot be crossed; and immediately behind are her own hills, with half a dozen possible citadels. Jericho is thus a city surrounded by resources. Yet in war she has always been easily taken. That her walls fell down at the sound of Joshua's trumpets

Her weakness.

in salt soil. Other Greek and Latin writers mention Jericho and its fruits; cf. Horace, *Epistles*, ii. 2. 184: 'Herodis palmetis pinguibus.' Mark Antony had given the region to Cleopatra, and Herod farmed it of her (xv. *Antt.* iv. 2; i. *Wars*, xviii. 5); but in 30 B.C., by gift of Augustus, he got it to himself (xv. *Antt.* vii. 3; i. *Wars*, xx. 3). He built there a palace, which Archelaus rebuilt, baths and theatres. He fortified a citadel on the hill behind the city, and called it Kypros, after his mother (xvi. *Antt.* v. 2; i. *Wars*, xxi. 4, 9; ii. *Wars*, xviii. 6). It is probably the present ruin Beit-Gubr or Qubr. Herod lived much and died in Jericho. In our Lord's time, Jericho was directly under the Romans, who farmed its revenues. See Pressel's *Priscilla an Sabina*, a book in the form of letters from a Roman lady in Jericho, on the imperial farms, to her friend at home, which gives a very vivid idea of the country at that time. Zaccheus was either connected with the imperial farms, or sat in this border town at receipt of custom—more probably the former, since he proposed to restore the money he had exacted, a task impossible to a mere toll-keeper with a passenger constituency. In Josephus' time, as we have seen, the region still flourished. In the fourth century there were many palms ('Descriptio Orbis Totius,' Müller, *Geogr. Græci Minores*, ii. 513). The Christian population was mainly of monks and anchorites, with keepers of inns for pilgrims; and under these influences cultivation seems to have declined. In the seventh century Adamnan, and in the eighth another, still saw palm groves; but at the Moslem invasion the town was deserted. The Saracens revived the culture, and introduced sugar, which the Crusaders found growing (Rey, *Col. Franques*, etc., 248). There are ruins still called Tawahin-ez-Zukker, 'sugar-mills,' not far from the fount of Elisha. The revenues were great (Will. of Tyre, xv. 27) at the time of the Latin kingdom. There were still palms. From the Crusades onwards, the place was more and more neglected, till it was reduced to its present pitiful condition. The last palm was seen by Robinson in 1838; it is now gone. The present village occupies the site neither of the Old Testament nor of the New Testament Jericho. The former lay round 'Ain es Sultan; the latter to the south of this, on the Wady Kelt. Robinson, *Bib. Res.* i. Cf. Zschokke, *Topographie der westlichen Jordans'au*, Jerusalem, 1866.

is no exaggeration, but the soberest summary of all her history. Judæa could never keep her. She fell to Northern Israel till Northern Israel perished.[1] She fell to Bacchides and the Syrians.[2] She fell to Aristobulus when he advanced on his brother Hyrcanus and Judæa.[3] She fell without a blow to Pompey,[4] and at the approach of Herod and again of Vespasian her people deserted her.[5] It is also interesting to note that three invaders of Judæa—Bacchides, Pompey, and Vespasian—took Jericho before they attempted Jerusalem, although she did not lie upon their way to the latter, and that they fortified her, not, it is to be supposed, as a base of operations, so much as a source of supplies. This weakness of Jericho was due to two causes. An open pass came down on her from Northern Israel, and from this both part of her water supply could be cut off, and the hills behind her could be occupied. But besides this, her people seem never to have been distinguished for bravery; and, indeed, in that climate, how could they? Enervated by the great heat, which degrades all the inhabitants of the Ghôr, and unable to endure on their bodies aught but linen,[6] it was impossible they could be warriors, or anything but irrigators, paddlers in water and soft earth. We forget how near neighbours they had been to Sodom and Gomorrah. No great man was born in Jericho; no heroic deed was ever done in her. She has been called 'the key' and 'the guardhouse' of Judæa; she was only the pantry. She never stood a siege, and her inhabitants were always running away.

[1] See last chapter.
[2] I Macc. ix. 50-53; xiii. *Antt.* i. 3
[3] xiv. *Antt.* i. 2; cf. xiii.; *ib.* xvi. 3.
[4] xiv. *Antt.* iv. I.
[5] xiv. *Antt.* xv. 3; iv. *Wars*, viii. 2
[6] iv. *Wars*, viii. 3.

The next road from the East into Judah is that which leads up through the wilderness from Engedi.[1] The oasis of Engedi itself is the cause of this road, for there are other gorges breaking upwards from the Dead Sea, which are not so difficult as the rocky stair that climbs from it. Here again we see what we saw at Jericho, and to a less degree at 'Ain Feshkah—that on this side of Judæa the presence of water and of gardens is more necessary to a road than any open pass.

The Pass and Oasis of Engedi.

He who has been to Engedi will always fear lest he exaggerate its fertility to those who have not. The oasis bursts upon him from one of the driest and most poisoned regions of our planet. Either he has ridden across Jeshimon, seven hours without a water-spring, three with hardly a bush, when suddenly, over the edge of a precipice, 400 feet below him, he sees a river of verdure burst from the rock, and scatter itself, reeds, bush, trees and grass, down other 300 feet to a broad mile of gardens by the beach of the blue sea; or he has come along the coast, through evil sulphur smells,[2] with the bitter sea on one side, the cliffs of the desert on the other, and a fiery sun overhead, when round a corner of the cliffs he sees the same broad fan of verdure open and slope before him. He passes up it, through gardens of cucumber and melon, small fields of wheat, and a scattered orchard, to a brake of reeds and high bushes, with a few great trees. He hears what, perhaps, he has not heard for days—the rush of water; and then through

[1] 'The well of the wild goat;' modern name, 'Ain-Jidi.'

[2] South of Engedi we failed to find Tristram's hot sulphur springs where they are marked on the Survey Map, but the sulphurous smell was very apparent, and the gravel badly stained. Heat 94° in shade of thorn-bush, in spite of a strong breeze.

the bush he sees the foam of a little waterspout, six feet high and almost two broad, which is only one branch of a pure, fresh stream that breaks from some boulders above on the shelf at the foot of the precipices. The verdure and water, so strange and sudden, with the exhilaration of the great view across the sea, produce the most generous impressions of this oasis, and tempt to the exaggeration of its fertility. The most enthusiastic, however, could not too highly rate its usefulness as a refuge, for it lies at the back of a broad desert, and is large enough to sustain an army. Its own caves are insignificant, but in the neighbourhood there is one 'vast grotto.'[1] More obvious are the sites of ancient 'strongholds,' such as David built; and over the neighbourhood of the stream are scattered the ruins of masonry—remains of the town which Solomon perhaps fortified,[2] which was the centre of a toparchy under the Romans,[3] still a large village in the fourth century,[4] and during the Crusades gathered round a con-

[1] Guided by a negro slave of the Rushaideh Arabs, who own and cultivate the oasis, I searched for caves. There is a tiny one on the terrace, where the water springs, and three more lower down, almost on the level of the plain. According to my guide, these were all the caves. None of them was large enough to have been the scene of such a story as 1 Sam. xxiv. *The strongholds* of David (xxiii. 29, and xxiv. 22) must have lain by the water, and the cave is described below them (xxiv. 22). Tristram (*Land of Israel*, p. 286) describes 'a fairy grotto of vast size.'

[2] In 1 Kings ix. 18, the Hebrew text reads Tamar, while the Hebrew margin and 2 Chron. viii. 4 read Tadmor. The latter is evidently not correct, for the town is described as *in the wilderness in the land*. Tamar, therefore, must be sought for somewhere in the wilderness of Judæa, and where more suitably than in this frontier village of Hazazon Tamar? Perhaps the Tamar of Ezek. xlvii. 19, xlviii. 28, is the same place.

[3] Josephus, iii. *Wars*, iii. 5, but omitted by Pliny in his list of the toparchies, *Hist. Nat.* v. 14. 70.

[4] Eusebius, *Onomast.*, art. Ἐγγαδδὶ: καὶ νῦν ἐστὶ κώμη μεγίστη Ἰουδαίων. Both Eusebius and Jerome place it vaguely in the wilderness, in the Aulôn, or Plain of Jericho, and on the Dead Sea. Cf. Ptolemy, v. 16. 8.

vent, with vineyards celebrated all through Syria.[1] In ancient times Engedi was also famous, like Jericho, for its palms and balsam.[2] From the former it derived one of its names, Hazazon-Tamar—'Hazazon of the Palm'—but this tree has now disappeared as wholly as the vine. If we thus feel the fitness of Engedi for a refuge, we can also appreciate why it should rank only second to Jericho as a gateway into Judæa and a source of supplies for the march through the wilderness behind. The way up from it is very steep. It is not a pass so much as a staircase, which has had partly to be hewn and partly to be built over the rocks.[3] When you have climbed it, you stand on a rolling plateau. The road breaks into two branches, both of them covered in parts with ancient pavement. One turns away north-west by the Wady Husaseh—in which name the first part of Hazazon-Tamar, perhaps, survives—to Herod's castle of Herodeion, Bethlehem and Jerusalem. It is a wild, extremely difficult road, and almost never used by caravans.[4] The other branch turns south-west to Yuttah and Hebron.[5] This is the proper route from Engedi into Judæa. As the roads from Jericho make for Bethel or Jerusalem, so this from Engedi makes for Hebron. Hebron and Engedi have

Roads inland from Engedi.

[1] Rey, *Colonies Franques*, 384. It was under Hebron. 'J'y ai retrouvé en 1858,' says Rey, 'des restes de constructions médiævales.' Scott it will be remembered, places here one of the episodes of the *Talisman*.

[2] Josephus, ix. *Antt.* i. 2.

[3] This staircase is only some 500 feet, but, owing to its steepness and narrowness, which allow the animals of a caravan to convey up it only a fraction of their usual burdens, our mules took two hours to bring our baggage up.

[4] The salt-carriers from Jebel Usdum to Jerusalem seem, from answers they made to our inquiries, to prefer to go on further north, before turning up to Jerusalem.

[5] For a full description, see Robinson, *Bib. Res.* ii. pp. 209 ff.

always been closely connected. David came down to Engedi from the Hebron neighbourhood, and the Crusading convent of Engedi was under the Bishop of Saint Abraham.[1]

The Valley of Blessing.

In the reign of Jehoshaphat, the Moabites and Ammonites, with other allies, invaded Judæa by Engedi[2]—a route which they chose, not necessarily because they had come round the south of the Dead Sea, but because Jericho at this time belonged not to Judæa but to Israel. From Engedi they followed neither of the roads just described, but struck up between them, through the *wilderness of Tekoa*, towards the village of this name. It is not a difficult route for an army—certainly less steep than any other part of the approach to the Central Plateau from the desert.[3] They came by *the ascent of Ziz*. Jehoshaphat went out to meet them in the *wilderness of Jeruel*, but found them already slaughtered and dispersed in a valley, which was therefore called by the relieved Judæans Berachah, or 'Blessing.' All these places are as unknown as the agents of the mysterious slaughter. The latter is said to have been effected by *ambushments*, and truly, in that tangle of low hills and narrow water-courses, enough men might hide to surprise and overcome a large army. The Bedouin camps are unseen till you are just upon them, and the bare banks of a gully, up the torrent-bed of which a caravan is painfully making its way, may be dotted in two minutes with armed men.[4] It was probably

[1] The Crusaders' name for Hebron. See Rey, *loc. cit.*

[2] 2 Chron. xx.

[3] We followed it, for the sake of our mules, in preference to the rough road towards Bethlehem.

[4] We had experience of this on our way from Engedi to Tekoa. In the afternoon we were coming up a long winding gully, with no living creature in

some desert tribes which thus overcame Jehoshaphat's enemies before he arrived. The narrative is very obscure, but through it we can clearly see the characteristics of this region—the tangled hills, the ambushes, the sudden surprise, the bare valley strewn with the slain and their spoil.

South of Engedi, on the dreary desert as it falls to the precipices of the Dead Sea, the traveller still comes across traces of a great military road. We found these fragments in a line making straight for the edge of the precipice above Masada, but how they had been continued down the cliff we could not discover. It had been a road suitable for wheeled vehicles, but now even mules can scarcely descend to Masada. This road has for our present task no importance. It was not an entrance to the land, but a purely inland passage connecting the Herodian fortresses of Masada and Herodium.

The road from Masada.

I have purposely refrained till now from touching upon Israel's entrance into Western Palestine, which took place across this border. But, after what we have just seen, we are in a position to judge how far the geography of the latter corresponds to the narratives in Joshua and Judges. These narratives are compiled from several sources, which, on some points, differ in their testimony.[1] But they agree as to their main facts:

The Incoming of Israel.

sight save a shepherd on a height at a distance. He gave a cry, which was answered from a farther hill, and, in an incredibly short time, we were surrounded by armed and yelling Arabs, on foot and horseback. They belonged to the Rushaîdeh tribe, and the cause of their anger was that we had taken as guides through their land some of the Jâhalin. We invited the chiefs to dinner at Tekoa, paid two dollars for toll, and were not further troubled.

[1] For instance, as to the origin of the name Gilgal. On the other hand, it is an open question whether we find such a difference, amounting to a contradiction, between Josh. vi. 24-27, which belongs to the great document of the Hexateuch, J E, and relates how Israel burnt Jericho and all that was

that Israel's invasion of Western Palestine was effected by the nation as a whole, and under the leadership of Joshua; that it was an invasion by siege and battle, that the crossing of the Jordan took place near Jericho, that Jericho was the first town taken from the Canaanites, that Joshua set the central camp at Gilgal, and that thence Israel divided into two branches, one of which—Judah and Simeon with the Kenites—attacked Central and Southern Judæa, but the other, the House of Joseph under Joshua, went up to Ai, Bethel, and Mount Ephraim.

The truth of this narrative of Israel's invasion has been denied in almost every particular by Stade, who maintains that all Israel did not invade Western Palestine at one time, that Joshua did not lead them, that they did not wage war on the Canaanites, and that they did not cross in the region of Jericho. There will be found, in an Appendix to this volume, an attempt to show the baselessness of the presuppositions from which Stade starts this theory,—so singularly opposed to the only traditions we possess on the subject,—and there will also be found detailed objections to his arguments.[1] Here it is sufficient to point out how the evidence of the geography we have just been surveying is—as far as it can go—

Stade's Theories.

therein, and Joshua cursed the rebuilder of it (a curse of which 1 Kings xvi. 34 narrates the fulfilment), and Judges iii. 13, from a different document, which tells how Eglon of Moab smote Israel and possessed the City of Palm-trees. Of course, it is possible to attempt to solve this apparent contradiction by emphasising the fact that Jericho has changed its site more than once; and that Judges iii. 13 speaks of a Jericho which had risen on another site from that cursed by Joshua. But there is no sign of this, and, on the data before us, it seems more probable that the writer of Judges iii. 13 was unacquainted with the facts in Joshua vi. 24-27.

[1] See Appendix II. Joshua's historical reality is supported by the fact that he is mentioned not only in Document E, as Stade avers, but in Document J as well.

against Stade's theory, and in harmony with the main lines of the biblical narrative. Let us bear in mind the limits of geographical evidence. It cannot absolutely prove a narrative to be correct, but if its data agree with the line the narrative takes, especially if the narrative (like the one before us) has come down along several lines of tradition, it must create a great presumption in favour of the narrative. Again, it may prove other and rival versions of the events, which the narrative describes, to be improbable or even absurd, and in that case, of course, it lends the narrative itself additional support. This is what geography does in the issue between Stade's theory and the biblical account of Israel's invasion of Western Palestine. Stade's theory fits the geographical conditions neither on the east bank nor on the west bank of Jordan.

And the Geography.

Stade declares that Israel cannot have crossed at Jericho, because the Plain of Shittim opposite Jericho then belonged to Moab; but it is generally admitted, even by critics most in sympathy with Stade,[1] that Moab was at the time south of the Arnon, and that Israel occupied all to the north of this. It is true that later on Moab did hold the country opposite Jericho, but this proves that the tradition that Israel crossed there could not have arisen at the late date to which Stade assigns it. Again, when he maintains that Israel could not have beaten the Canaanites in war on the Plain of Jordan, we must point to the singular fact we have already shown, that Jericho never did stand a siege all down her history. But the strongest argument against Stade's theory lies in the double direction which the invasion is said to have taken from Jericho. All agree that Israel won a footing

[1] *E.g.*, Wellhausen, *Hist.* p. 5.

on two parts of the Central Range—Mount Ephraim and the part opposite the Dead Sea—between which there lay for some time a belt of Canaanite country. But from what centre except Jericho could these separate positions be equally reached? Certainly not from the Jabbok; it is almost inconceivable that if Judah crossed at the Jabbok, as, according to Stade, the rest of the tribes did,[1] she fought her wars so far south as the Negeb of Judæa.

The Biblical Narratives and the Geography.

On the other hand, the main lines of the biblical narrative are in harmony with the geographical data. The crossing of Jericho is a possible and a likely thing:[2] the quick conquest of Jericho is in harmony with all we have learned of that city's physical characteristics and her failure throughout history to stand any siege;[3] the double direction of the subsequent invasion, north-west and south-west, agrees absolutely with the position of the standing camp of Israel near Jericho at Gilgal, and with the lines of road which we have been following from Jericho to the interior; while, finally, the return of Joshua to Gilgal after the first conquests on the Central Range,[4] and the authority which, it is to be presumed, Israel continued to exercise from Gilgal upon the Central Range, has an interesting analogy

[1] It has been thought by some that Judah did not enter Palestine across the Jordan with the rest of the tribes, but, along with the Kenites, came up from Kadesh through the Negeb. Stade will not allow more than a *perhaps* to this theory (*Gesch.* 132; he says nothing of it in his account of Judah 157-160). Oort has adopted it in his Atlas. But every geographical indication goes to show that Judah entered her territory from the north, her first seats being Bethlehem and Baal-Judah (Kiriath Jearim), and that only later did she come south to Hebron.

[2] Meyer, whose analysis of the Documents (*Z A T W*, I.) is unsparing, firmly believes in this part of the narrative.

[3] The bulk of Joshua iv., describing the fall of Jericho, belongs to the two oldest documents J E.

[4] Josh. x. 43.

in the description (from the same source)[1] of the district of Gilgal, as a centre of Canaanite authority over the Central Range before Israel's time; while both facts are seen to be perfectly possible in face of the open passes that lead up from this part of the Jordan Valley into Mount Ephraim.

The entrance of Judah and Simeon.

The route by which Judah and Simeon went up to *their lots*[2] cannot, of course, be definitely traced by us. But we may notice that two of the most ancient settlements of Judah—Bethlehem and Hebron[3]—correspond to the two great routes from the Jordan Valley into Central Judæa, by 'Ain Feshkah and Engedi. With them went up the nomadic tribe which at Sinai had attached itself to the fortunes of Israel. *And the sons of Hobab, the Kenite, brother-in-law of Moses, went up out of the Town of Palms with the children of Judah into the wilderness of Judah at the going down of Arad*, and they *went and dwelt with the Amalekite.*[4] That is to say, while the main Judæan stock

The Kenites.

[1] Deut. xi. 30, which is from the same hand as Josh. x. 43.

[2] Judges i. Meyer and Budde have shown the true course and connection of this chapter (mainly from J). See Budde, *Ri. u. Sam.* 1-24, 84-89.

[3] Judges i. 3-11.

[4] Judges i. 16. The corrupt Hebrew text must be amended in some such way as above. See Meyer and Hollenberg (*Z A T W*, I.). Budde, *Ri. u. Sam.* 9-11 and 86, Kittel, *Gesch.* 242, 243. There is no reason to omit *sons of* as Budde does; it is justified by different LXX. sources, and the passage, from the plural verb in the first clause to the singular verbs in the second, need give no trouble. That a proper name has fallen out of the Hebrew text is obvious. *Brother-in-law* needs it, and LXX. MSS. give us a choice of two, of which Hobab is to be preferred in this J Document. Kittel is right in rejecting Meyer's suggestion of *and Qain.* The *going down of Arad*, LXX. (Vatican text) is to be preferred to the Massoretic *Negeb* or *south of Arad*, for, as Budde says, if Arad is in the wilderness of Judah, it cannot be connected with the Negeb. In v. 17, Budde and Kittel rightly retain Arad. All agree with Hollenberg that העם people must read העמלק 'Amaleḳ or Budde more correctly העמלקי, the Amaleḳite. The LXX. has 'Amaleḳ, and the reading is in conformity with 1 Sam xv. 5 ff.

settled on the arable ground, and in cities, and intermarried with the Canaanites, the Kenites, true to their nomadic origin, turned into the wilderness of Judah, and dwelt with the Amalekites. The *going down of Arad* is the south-eastern buttress of the Judæan plateau, at the head of the gorge which runs up from Masada, the Wady Seyyal. The name Arad still exists there seventeen miles south-east of Hebron. The rocky dwelling of the Kenite, visible from Nebo,[1] cannot be strictly identified. It is probably not the heights of Yekin, to which it has been assigned,[2] for those are not sufficiently in the desert. Engedi itself is possible. The stronghold and oasis must have been in possession of somebody: to-day they are owned and cultivated by the Rushaîdeh, a Bedawee tribe like the Kenites.

II. The Southern Border: the Negeb.

The survey of the southern border of Judæa leads us out upon a region of immense extent and of great historical interest—the Negeb, translated *The South* in our version,[3]

[1] Num. xxiv. 21 ff.

[2] *P.E.F.* Red. Map, 1891. Henderson, p. 71. The name has no real similarity.

[3] *E.g.*, Gen. xiii. 1; 1 Sam. xxx. 1; Ps. cxxvi. 4. The Negeb extended from the Arabah to the coast, and was variously named according to the people on the north of it. There was the נ״ הכרתי, or the part to the south of Philistia; נ״ הירחמאלי, south of the Shephelah; נ׳ כלב, south of Hebron (there is a W. el Kulâb about ten miles south-west of Hebron); the נ׳ יהודה or אשר ליהודה, which covered the same central portion, and the נ׳ הקני which was the eastmost part to the south of the seats of the Kenites (1 Sam. xxvii. 10, xxx. 14, 2 Sam. xxiv. 7). It is once used for Judah, Ezek. xxi. 2 f. (Heb.); in the Book of Daniel it stands for Egypt, viii. 9, xi. 5 ff. As ים Sea is used in Palestine for the West, so Negeb came to be used generically for the South; the south border, Josh. xv. 2, 4, xviii. 19; south of Gennesareth, Josh. xi. 2, cf. Zech. xiv. 10. The name occurs several times on the Egyptian monuments: W. Max Müller, *Asien u. Europa nach. altägypt. Denkm.*, 148.

but literally meaning the Dry or Parched Land. The character and the story of the Negeb require a separate study: here we are concerned with it only as the southern border of Judæa.

Between Hebron and Beersheba.

From Hebron the Central Range lets itself slowly down by broad undulations, through which the great Wady Khulîl[1] winds as far as Beersheba, and then, as Wady es-Seba, turns sharply to the west, finding the sea near Gaza. It is a country visited by annual rains, with at least a few perennial springs, and in the early summer abundance of flowers and corn. We descended from Hebron to Dhâheriyah, probably the site of Kiriath Sepher, over moors and through wheat-fields, arranged in the narrower wadies in careful terraces, but lavishly spread over many of the broader valleys. A thick scrub covered most of the slopes. There were olive groves about the villages, but elsewhere few trees. We passed a stream and four springs,[2] two with tracts of marshy ground, and, though it was the end of April, some heavy showers fell. South of Dhâheriyah—which may be regarded as the frontier town between the hill-country and the Negeb[3]—the soil is more

[1] El-Khulîl, 'the friend,' that is, of God, a title of Abraham, is also the modern name of his city, Hebron, near which the Wady starts.

[2] On either side of the Seil el Dilbeh is a spring; on the north, the 'Ain Hegireh, with a shadoof for irrigation, and on the south the 'Ain Dilbeh, a square pool covered with weeds. These have been supposed to be the upper and nether springs granted by Caleb to his daughter, to compensate for the dryness of her domain in the Negeb (Judges i. 14, 15). It is a very fertile valley here, and the hills can feed many flocks. But there are springs farther south than these two, and a stream running in April in the Wady Hafayer.

[3] Edh-Dhâheriyah is probably Debir, known also as Kiriath Sepher (Josh. xv. 15), which LXX. translate *πόλις γραμμάτων*, city of letters. Moore (quoted in Siegfr. Stade) suggests קרית סְפָר, or Border-town. But why not Pay-town, or Toll-town? (after סְפָר payment, 2 Chron. ii. 16, Heb.; 17, Eng.) It lies

bare, but travellers coming up from the desert delight in the verdure which meets them as soon as they have passed Beersheba and the Wady es-Seba.[1] The disposition of the land—the gentle descent cut by the broad Wady—and its fertility render it as open a frontier, and as easy an approach to Judæa, as it is possible to conceive. But it does not roll out upon the level desert. South of Beersheba, before the level desert is reached and the region of roads from Arabia to Egypt and Philistia, there lie sixty miles of mountainous country, mostly disposed in 'steep ridges running east and west,'[2] whose inaccessibleness is further certified by the character of the tribe that roam upon it. Wilder sons of Ishmael are not to be found on all the desert.[3] The vegetation, even after rain, is very meagre, and in summer totally disappears. 'No great route now leads, or ever has led, through this district;'[4] but the highways which gather upon the south of it from Egypt, Sinai, the Gulf of Akabah, and Arabia, are thrust by it either to the east up the Wady 'Arabah to the Dead Sea, or to the west towards Gaza and Philistia. Paths, indeed, skirt this region, and

South of Beersheba.

on a high-road. Another name is קרית סנה Kiriath Sannah (Josh. xv. 49), thorn-town (?), perhaps only a misreading of Kiriath Sepher, since LXX. still have *πόλις γραμμάτων*. It is at least worth noting that the Hebrew common noun of the same spelling as the name of the town, דביר or Debîr, means the back-part, or part behind; while Dhâheriyah may mean that also. The town must have lain in the neighbourhood of Hebron, and on the hills (Josh. xi. 21; xv. 48). It had been a chief town of the Canaanites (xii. 13), and was set apart for the priests (xxi. 1, 15), but might also be said to be on the Negeb, xv., cf. v. 15 with v. 19 (though this does not necessarily follow). Now Dhâheriyah does suit this double designation. It is on the hills, but at the *back* of them, when coming from Judah, and just over the edge of the very fertile country. See Additional Note at end of volume.

[1] Robinson, *B.R.* i. 305, 306.

[2] *Ib.* 275.

[3] The Azazimeh; cf. Trumbull's *Kadesh Barnea.*

[4] Robinson, *B.R.* i. 275.

even cross its corners, but they are not war-paths. When Judah's frontier extended to Elath, Solomon's cargoes from Ophir,[1] and the tribute of Arabian kings to Jehoshaphat,[2] were doubtless carried through it. When any one power held the whole land, merchants traversed it from Petra to Hebron or Gaza,[3] or skirted it by the Roman road that ran up the west of it from Akabah to Jerusalem;[4] and even whole tribes might drift across it in days when Judah had no inhabitants to resist them. When the Jews came back from exile, they found Edomites settled at least as far north as Hebron. But no army of invasion, knowing that opposition awaited them upon the Judæan frontier, would venture across those steep and haggard ridges, especially when the Dead Sea and Gaza routes lie so convenient on either hand, and lead to regions so much more fertile than the Judæan plateau.

The Negeb as a frontier.

Hence we find Judæa almost never invaded from the south. Chedorlaomer's expedition, on its return from the desert of Paran, swept north by the 'Arabah to the cities of the plain, sacking Engedi by the way, but leaving Hebron untouched.[5] Israel themselves were repulsed seeking to enter the Promised Land by this frontier;[6] and, perhaps most significant of all, the invasion by Islam, though its chief

[1] 1 Kings ix. 26-28.
[2] 2 Chron. xvii. 11.
[3] As they do to this day. See p. 183.
[4] As shown in the *Tabula Peutingeriana*.
[5] Gen. xiv.
[6] The theory that either the whole tribes of Judah and Simeon, or the Kenites, did not cross the Jordan like the rest of Israel, but came up through the Negeb, has absolutely no evidence to support it beyond the fact that for a time Judah was separated from the other tribes by a Canaanite belt crossing the range in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem; and this is satisfactorily explained, as we have seen, by the double and far-parting entrance into the land at Jericho. See pp. 276 ff.

goal may be said to have been the Holy City of Jerusalem, and though its nearest road to this lay past Hebron, swerved to east and west, and entered, some of it by Gaza, and some, like Israel, across Jordan. The most likely foes to swarm upon Judah by the slopes of Hebron were the natives of this wild desert, the *Arabians*, or, as they were called from the Red Sea[1] to Philistia,[2] *the Amalekites*; but it is to be remarked that though they sometimes invaded the Negeb,[3] they must have been oftener attracted, as they still are, to the more fertile and more easily over-run fields of the Philistines. It was *nine furlongs from Jamnia* that Judas Maccabeus defeated in a great battle *the nomads of Arabia*;[4] and the proper harbour of the desert and emporium of Arabian trade was, as we have seen, not Hebron but Gaza.[5] The best defences of a road or a frontier against these impetuous swarms of warriors are strong towers, such as still protect the great Hajj road from Syria to Mecca from the Bedouin,[6] and of these Uzziah built a number in the desert to the south and east of Judah.[7] The symbolic use of towers in the Bible is well known.

The roads of the Negeb.

The most notable road across this border of Judah was the continuation of the great highway from Bethel, which kept the watershed to Hebron, and thence came down to Beersheba. From here it struck due south across the western ridges of the savage highland district, and divided into several branches. One, the Roman road already noticed, curved round the south of the highland district to Akabah and Arabia; another, the way perhaps of Elijah when he fled from Jezebel,[8] and

[1] Exod. xvii. 8.
[2] 1 Sam. xxx. 1.
[3] 1 Chron. iv. 43.
[4] 2 Macc. xii. 11.
[5] See p. 182 ff.
[6] Cf. Doughty, *Arabia Deserta*, i. 13.
[7] 2 Chron. xxvi. 10.
[8] 1 Kings xix.

much used by mediæval and modern pilgrims, crossed to Sinai; while a third struck direct upon Egypt, the *way to Shur.* By this last Abraham passed and repassed through the Negeb;[1] Hagar, the Egyptian slave-woman, fled from her mistress, perhaps with some wild hope of reaching her own country;[2] and Jacob went down into Egypt with his wagons.[3] In times of alliance between Egypt and Judah, this was the way of communication between them. So that fatal embassy must have gone from Jerusalem, which Isaiah describes as struggling in *the land of trouble and anguish, whence are the young lion and the old lion, the viper and fiery flying serpent*;[4] and so, in the time of the Crusades, those rich caravans passed from Cairo to Saladin at Jerusalem, one of which Richard intercepted near Beersheba.[5] It is an open road, but a wild one, and was never, it would seem, used for the invasion of Judæa from Egypt.[6] The nearer way to the most of Syria from Egypt lay, as we have seen, along the coast, and, passing up the Maritime Plain, left the hill-country of Judæa to the east.

This, then, was the southern frontier of Judah, in itself an easy access, with one trunk-road, but barred by the

[1] Gen. xiii. 1.

[2] Gen. xvi. 7. The *well was called Be'er Lahai Roi = The Well of the Living One who seeth me*, but it may be *The Well* called '*He that seeth me liveth*' (Wel.), *behold*, it is *between Kadesh and Bered* (for the latter the Targum Ps. Jonathan gives Khalutza, *i.e.* the present Khalasah, ruins thirteen miles south of Beersheba). Twelve miles north-west of 'Ain Kadis is 'Ain el Muweileh, which Rowlands says is pronounced Moilahhi by the Arabs, and thus it is suggested, is Mâ-lehayi-rai, or 'water of the living one seeing' (*P.E.F.Q.*, 1884, 177).

[3] Gen. xlvi. 1, 5 f. [4] Isa. xxx. 6. [5] See p. 235.

[6] Unless Shishak came up this way. In his lists of conquests occur some names in the Negeb, but not far enough south to prove that he took this road. See Maspero in *Trans. Vict. Inst.*; W. Max Müller, *Asien u. Europa*, 148.

great desert ridges to the south of it, and enjoying even greater security from the fact of its more lofty and barren position between two regions of such attractiveness to invaders as the Valley of the Jordan and the Plain of Philistia. Before we leave this region, it is well to notice that the broad barrier of rough highlands to the south of Beersheba represents the difference between the ideal and the practical borders ot the Holy Land. Practically the land extended from Dan to Beersheba, where, during the greater part of history, the means of settled cultivation came to an end ; but the ideal border was the River of Egypt, the present Wady el Arish, whose chief tributary comes right up to the foot of the highlands south of Beersheba, and passes between them and the level desert beyond.

The Southern frontier—real and ideal.

Of all names in Palestine there are hardly any better known than Beersheba. Nothing could more aptly illustrate the defencelessness of these southern slopes of Judah than that this site which marked the frontier of the land was neither a fortress nor a gateway, but a cluster of wells on the open desert. But, like Dan, at the other end of the land, Beersheba was a sanctuary. These two facts—its physical use to their flocks, its holiness to themselves—are strangely intermingled in the stories of the Patriarchs, whose herdsmen strove for its waters ; who themselves *plant a tamarisk, and call on the name of Jehovah, the everlasting God.* The two great narratives of the Pentateuch differ in describing the origin of Beersheba. The one imputes it to Abraham, the other, in very similar circumstances, to Isaac.[1] The meaning of

Beersheba.

[1] Gen. xxi. 22-32, which imputes it to Abraham, belongs to the Document E ; but Gen. xxvi. 26-33, v. 33, which imputes it to Isaac, belongs to J.

the name as it stands might either be the Well of Seven or the Well of (the) Oath, and in one passage both etymologies seem to be struggling for decision,[1] though the latter prevails. There are seven wells there now, and to the north, on the hills that bound the valley, are scattered ruins nearly three miles in circumference. Beersheba was a place of importance under Samuel; his sons judged there.[2] Elijah fled to Beersheba.[3] It was still a sanctuary in the eighth century, and frequented even by Northern Israel.[4] During the separation of the kingdoms the formula, *from Dan to Beersheba*, became *from Geba to Beersheba*,[5] or *from Beersheba to Mount Ephraim*.[6] On the return from exile, Beersheba was again peopled by Jews, and the formula ran *from Beersheba to the valley of Hinnom*.[7] In Roman times Beersheba was 'a very large village' with a garrison.[8] It was the seat of a Christian bishopric.[9] The Crusaders did not come so far south, and confused Beersheba with Beit-Jibrin.[10]

South of Beersheba, for thirty miles, the country, though mostly barren, is sprinkled with ruins of old villages, gathered round wells. They date mostly from Christian times, and are eloquent in their testimony to

[1] Gen. xxi. 22-31*a* obviously implies the meaning to be the Well of Seven. But 31*b*-32 more strongly says that it means the Well of the Oath. It almost seems as if two accounts were here mingled; and, though there is no linguistic proof of this, all the passage from 22 to 32 belonging to E, one is inclined to extend J back from 33, 34 to 31*b*. Stade thinks the meaning Seven Wells was the ancient Canaanite one (the form in that sense being un-Hebraic), and that the Well of the Oath was what the Hebrews changed it to in conformity with their syntax, *Gesch.* i. 127. LXX., Gen. xxi. 31, *φρέαρ ὁρκισμοῦ*, xlvi. 1, *τὸ φρέαρ τοῦ ὅρκου*.

[2] 1 Sam. viii. 2. [3] 1 Kings xix. 3. [4] Amos v. 5, viii. 14.

[5] 2 Kings xxiii. 8. [6] 2 Chron. xix. 4. [7] Neh. xi. 27, 30.

[8] Euseb. and Jerome, *Onom.* art. Βηρσαβεέ, Bersabee.

[9] Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* [10] See p. 232.

the security which the Roman Government imposed on even the most lawless deserts. The only Old Testament sites that are important are the city of Salt[1] and Moladah;[2] Zephath or Hormah and Ziklag, all unknown; Rehoboth is probably Ruheibeh. The ascent of 'Akrabbim was on the south-east corner of Judæa, going up from the 'Arabah valley, near the end of the Dead Sea.[3]

Other towns of the Negeb.

One other thing we must note before we leave this border of Judah. Just as on her eastern border Judah was in touch with the Arab Kenites, so on the Negeb she touched, and in time absorbed, the Amalekite or Edomite clan of the Jerahmeelites.[4]

III. The Western Border.

The ideal boundary of Judæa on the west was the Mediterranean, but, as we have seen, the Maritime Plain was never in Jewish possession (except for intervals in the days of the Maccabees), and even the Shephelah was debatable ground, as often out of Judah as within it. The most frequent border, therefore, of Judah to the west was the edge of the Central Range. In the previous chapter on the Shephelah it was pointed out in detail how real a frontier this was. A long series of valleys running south from Ajalon to Beersheba separate the low loose hills of the Shephelah from the lofty compact range

[1] Josh. xv. 62.

[2] Josh. xv. 26, xix. 2; 1 Chron. iv. 28; Neh. xi. 26. Robinson places it at Tell el Milh, which Conder, however, identifies with the city of Salt.

[3] For the whole geography of this region, cf. Robinson, *B.R.* i., Trumbull's *Kadesh Barnea*, Palmer's *Desert of the Exodus*, Drake's and Kitchener's reports, *P.E.F.Q.*; also the relevant paragraphs in Henderson's *Palestine*.

[4] 1 Sam. xxvii. 10, xxx. 29: 1 Chron. ii. 9. Stade, *Gesch.* i. 159.

to the east—*the hill-country of Judæa.* This great barrier, which repelled the Philistines, even when they had conquered the Shephelah, is penetrated by a number of defiles, none more broad than those of Beth-horon, of the Wady Ali along which the present high-road to Jerusalem travels, and of the Wady Surar up which the railway runs. Few are straight, most of them sharply curve. The sides are steep, and often precipitous, frequently with no path between save the rough torrent bed, arranged in rapids of loose shingle, or in level steps of the limestone strata, which at the mouth of the defile are often tilted almost perpendicularly into easily defended obstacles of passage. The sun beats fiercely down upon the limestone; the springs are few, though sometimes very generous; a low thick bush fringes all the brows, and caves abound and tumbled rocks.[1]

The Western defiles.

Everything conspires to give the few inhabitants easy means of defence against large armies. It is a country of ambushes, entanglements, surprises, where large armies have no room to fight, and the defenders can remain hidden; where the essentials for war are nimbleness and the sure foot, the power of scramble and of rush. We see it all in the Eighteenth Psalm: *By thee do I run through a troop, and by my God do I leap over a wall; the God that girdeth me with strength and maketh my way perfect. He maketh my feet like hinds' feet, and setteth me on my high places. Thou hast enlarged my steps under me, and my feet have not slipped.*

[1] I describe from my observation of the Wady el-Kuf from Beit-Jibrin to Hebron, and of three defiles that run up from the W. en Najil to the plateau about Beit Atab. So also Schick, *Z.D.P.V.* x. 131, 132, on the Wady Ismain: '. . . dass das Thal viele und grosse Krummungen hat tief eingeschnitten und stets von steilen Böschungen eingeschlossen ist, und keine Ortschaften trägt.'

Yet with negligent defenders the western border of Judæa is quickly penetrated. Six hours at the most will bring an army up any of the defiles, and then they stand on the central plateau, within a few easy miles of Jerusalem or of Hebron. So it happened in the days of the Maccabees. The Syrians, repelled at Beth-horon, and at the Wady Ali, penetrated twice the unwatched defiles to the south, the second time with a large number of elephants, of which we are told that they had to come up the gorges in single file.[1] What a sight the strange huge animals must have been, pushing up the narrow path, and emerging for the first and almost only time in history on the plateau above! On both occasions the Syrians laid siege to Bethsur, the stronghold on the edge of the plateau, which Judas had specially fortified for the western defence of the country. The first time, they were beaten back down the gorges; but the second time, with the elephants, Bethsur fell, and the Syrian army advanced on Jerusalem. After that all attacks from the west failed, and the only other successful Syrian invasion was from the north.[2]

Their invaders.

Bethsur, the one fortress on the western flank of Judæa south of Ajalon, is due to the one open valley on that flank, the Vale of Elah, above the higher end of which it stands. The need of it could not be more eloquently signified than by the fact that it was up the Vale of Elah that the Philistines, the Syrians in the second century B.C., and Richard with the Third Crusade, all attempted to reach the central plateau—the Syrians and the Crusaders both choosing this entrance after their attack by Ajalon had failed.

Bethsur.

[1] Josephus xii. *Antt.* ix. 4.

[2] By Bacchides in 160.

But if invaders came up these defiles to the plateau, we may be sure that the settlers on the latter more easily passed down them to the Shephelah. Over the Shephelah Judah claimed, if she did not always exercise, dominion ; and the claim did not rest so much on conquest as on kinship. In the earliest times the tribe had intermarried with the Canaanites of the Shephelah, especially with those round about Adullam. This is the meaning of the extraordinary adventures related in Genesis xxxviii. : *Judah went down from his brethren, and turned in to a certain Adullamite whose name was Hirah.* To all lovers of the Bible this result of criticism must surely come as a relief, that the following verses relate, not the intercourse of individuals, but the intermarriage of families. As Judah, then, had Arabian allies and kinsfolk on her eastern and southern borders, so here, on her western, she mixed with the Canaanites.[1]

Judah and the Canaanites.

IV. The Northern Border: the Fortresses of Benjamin.

The narrow table-land of Judæa continues ten miles to the north of Jerusalem, before it breaks into the valleys and mountains of Samaria. These last ten miles of the Judæan plateau—with steep gorges on the one side to the Jordan and on the other to Ajalon—were the debatable land across which, as we have seen, the most accessible frontier of Judæa fluctuated ; and, therefore, they became the site of more fortresses, sieges, forays, battles and massacres, than perhaps any other part of the country. Their

[1] Lagarde explains Tamar, or Palm, by Phœnicia, Zerah (זרח=אזרח indigenous) by the aboriginal inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, and Pharez by the Hebrews (*Orientalia* ii. 1880).

appearance matches their violent history. A desolate and fatiguing extent of rocky platforms and ridges, of moorland strewn with boulders, and fields of shallow soil thickly mixed with stone, they are a true border—more fit for the building of barriers than for the cultivation of food.

The territory of Benjamin.

They were the territory of Benjamin, in whose blood, at the time of the massacre of the tribe by Judah,[1] they received the baptism of their awful history. As you cross them their aspect recalls the fierce temper of their inhabitants. *Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf*, father of sons who, noble or ignoble, were always passionate and unsparing,—Saul, Shimei, Jeremiah, and he that *breathed out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord*, and *was exceeding mad against them*.[2] In such a region of blood and tears Jeremiah beheld the figure of the nation's woe: *A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping, Rachel weeping for her children: she refuseth to be comforted for her children, because they are not*.[3]

But it is as a frontier that we have now to do with those ten northmost miles of the Judæan plateau. Upon

Bethel and the incoming roads.

the last of them three roads concentrate—an open highway from the west by Gophna, the great north road from Shechem, and a road from the Jordan Valley through the passes of Mount Ephraim. Where these draw together, about three miles from the end of the plateau, stood Bethel, a sanctuary before the Exile, thereafter a strong city of Judah.[4] But Bethel, where she stood, could not by herself keep the northern gate of Judæa. For behind her to the south

[1] Judges xx. 35.
[2] Acts ix. 1, xxvi. 11.
[3] Jer. xxxi. 15.
[4] 1 Macc. ix. 50.

emerge the roads we have already followed—that from the Jordan by Ai and those from Ajalon up the gorges and ridge of Beth-horon. The Ai route is covered by Michmash, where the Philistines were encamped against Saul and Jonathan,[1] and where the other Jewish hero who was called Jonathan—the Maccabeus—held for a time his headquarters.[2] The Beth-horon roads were covered by Gibeon,[3] the frontier post between David and Saul's house.[4] Between Michmash and Gibeon there are six miles, and on these lie others of the strong points that stood forth in the invasion and defence of this frontier: Geba, long the limit of Judah to the north;[5] Ramah, which Baasha, king of Israel, built for a blockade against Judah;[6] Adasa, where Judas Maccabeus pitched against Nicanor, coming up from Beth-horon.[7] These, with Michmash and Gibeon, formed a line of defence that was valid against the Ajalon and Ai ascents, as well as against the level approach from the north.

The other fortresses.

The earlier invasions delivered upon this frontier of Judah are difficult to follow. Before it was a frontier in the days of Saul, the Philistines overran it either from Ajalon, or from Mount Ephraim; Saul's centre was in Michmash. Whether, in their attacks upon Jerusalem,[8]

[1] 1 Sam. xiii. In vv. 17, 18 the three directions which the three foraging bands of the Philistines took are all plain. N. to Ophrah, the city of Ephraim, Et-Taiyibeh, W. to Beth-horon, SE. *over the ravine of Zeboim, i.e.* the Wady Abu Dubâ, running NE. into W. Farah, afterwards W. Kelt (cf. Neh. xi. 35), down which there is the name Shukh ed Duba. But see Buhl, 98 f.

[2] Josephus xiii. *Antt.* i. 6.

[3] Josh. x. 1-12.

[4] 2 Sam. ii. 12, 13.

[5] 2 Kings xxiii. 8.

[6] 1 Kings xv. 17.

[7] Josephus xii. *Antt.* x. 5; 1 Macc. vii. 40-45. Probably the present Khurbet Adasa on the road north from Jerusalem. Schürer (*Hist.* i. 1, 129) prefers a site nearer Gophna, because Eusebius (*Onom.* Ἀδασά) says it was near Gophna. But he could so describe Khurbet Adasa, for it is on the same road as Gophna.

[8] 2 Kings xiv. 8, xvi. 5.

Joash or Rezin and Pekah crossed it, it is impossible to say; probably the latter at least came up from the Arabah.

Invasions from the North.

Isaiah pictures a possible march this way by the Assyrians after the fall of Samaria. *He is come upon Ai; marcheth through Migron, at Michmash musters his baggage; they have passed the Pass; 'Let Geba be our bivouac.' Terror-struck is Ramah; Gibeah of Saul hath fled. Make shrill thy voice, O daughter of Gallim. Listen Laishah, answer her Anathoth; in mad flight is Madmenah; the dwellers in Gebim gather their stuff to flee. This very day he halteth at Nob; he waveth his hand at the mount of the daughter of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem.*[1] This is not actual fact—for the Assyrian did not then march upon Zion, and when he came twenty years later it was probably by the Beth-horon or another of the western passes—but this was what might have happened any day after the fall of Samaria. The prophet is describing how easily the Assyrian could advance by this open route upon Zion; and yet, if he did, Jehovah would cut him down in the very sight of his goal.[2] All the places mentioned are not known; and of those that are, some are off the high-road. How Nebuchadnezzar came up against Jerusalem is not stated;[3] but we can follow the course of subsequent invasions. In the great Syrian war in 160 B.C. Nicanor and Bacchides both attempted the plateau—the former unsuccessfully by Beth-horon, the latter with success from the north. In 64 Pompey marched from Beth-shan through Samaria, but could not have reached Judæa had the Jews only persevered in their defence of the passes of Mount Ephraim.[4]

[1] Isaiah x. 28-32. [2] Isaiah x. 32, 33. [3] 2 Kings xxiv. 10.

[4] But see p. 353, n. 5, on another possible route for Pompey.

These being left open, Pompey advanced easily by Koreæ and Jericho upon Bethel, and thence unopposed to the very walls of Zion.[1] In 37 B.C. Herod marched from the north and took Jerusalem.[2] In 66 A.D. Cestius Gallus came up by Beth-horon and Gibeon to invest Jerusalem, but speedily retreated by the same way.[3] In 70, after Vespasian had spent two years in reducing all the strong places round about Judæa, Titus led his legions to the great siege past Gophna and Bethel. It seems to have been by Pompey's route that the forces of Islam came upon Jerusalem; they met with no resistance either in Ephraim or Judah, and the city was delivered into their hands by agreement, 637 A.D.

In 1099, the first Crusaders advanced to their successful siege by Ajalon; in 1187, Saladin, having conquered the rest of the land, drew in on the Holy City from Hebron, from Askalon and from the north.

[1] xiv. *Antt.* iii. 3. [2] xiv. *Antt.* xvi. [3] See p. 211.



CHAPTER XIV

AN ESTIMATE OF

THE REAL STRENGTH OF JUDÆA

For this Chapter consult Maps I. and IV.

AN ESTIMATE OF THE REAL STRENGTH OF JUDÆA

HAVING gone round about Judæa, and marked well her bulwarks, we may now draw some conclusions as to the exact measure of her strength—physical and moral. Judæa has been called impregnable, but, as we must have seen, the adjective exaggerates. To the north she has no frontier; her southern border offers but few obstacles after the desert is passed; with all their difficulties, her eastern and western walls have been carried again and again; and even the dry and intricate wilderness, to which her defenders have more than once retired, has been rifled to its farthest recesses. Judæa, in fact, has been overrun as often as England.

Judæa not impregnable

And yet, like England, Judæa, though not impregnable, has all the advantages of insularity. It is singular how much of an island is this inland province. With the gulf of the Arabah to the east, with the desert to the south, and lifted high and unattractive above the line of traffic, which sweeps past her on the west, Judæa is separated as much as by water from the two great continents, to both of which she otherwise belongs. So open at many points, the land was yet sufficiently unpromising and sufficiently remote to keep unprovoked foreigners away. When they were pro-

but insular,

voked and did come upon her, then they found the waterlessness of her central plateau an almost insuperable obstacle to the prolonged sieges, which the stubbornness of her people forced them to make against her capital and other fortresses. And there was this further difficulty. Judæa's borders may all be more or less open, but they are of such a character as to compensate for each other's weakness. For an invader might come over one frontier and make it his own; but the defeated nation could retreat upon any of the others. In the intricacy of these or of the great desert, they could find ground on which to rally and sweep back upon the foe when he was sufficiently disheartened by the barrenness of the plateau he had invaded. Hence we never find, so far as I know, any successful invasion but one of Judæa, which was not delivered across at least three of her borders. The exception was the First Crusade; and there is sufficient to account for it in the laxity of the defence which it encountered. It is very significant that neither of the two greatest invaders of Judæa, who feared a real defence of her central plateau, ventured upon this till they had mastered the rest of Palestine, and occupied the strongholds round the Judæan borders. At the interval of more than a millennium, the tactics of Vespasian and of Saladin were practically identical. Vespasian not only overran Galilee and Samaria, but spent nearly another year in taking and refortifying Jamnia, Ashdod, and Hadida in the west, Bethel and Gophna to the north, Jericho to the east, and Hebron with other 'Idumæan strongholds' to the south, before he let slip his impatient legions upon Jerusalem. His own officers, as well as

and difficult to occupy.

The tactics of Vespasian and Saladin.

deserters from the city, urged him at once to march upon it, but Josephus says that Vespasian 'was obliged at first to overthrow what remained elsewhere, and to leave behind him nothing outside Jerusalem, which might interrupt him in that siege;'[1] and he closes the list of the Roman conquests around Judæa with the remark, 'now all the places were taken, except Herodium, Masada, and Machærus, so Jerusalem was now what the Romans aimed at.' Similarly, in 1187, Saladin, even after his great victory at Hattîn, did not venture to attack Jerusalem till the Jordan Valley, most of the Maritime Plain, with Askalon and even Beit-Jibrin, had first fallen into his hands. Nothing could more clearly prove to us that Judæa, though not impregnable, was extremely difficult to take, and that a swift rush across one of her borders, like that of Cestius Gallus in 66 A.D., was sure to end in disaster. To be successful, an invader must master at least three of her frontiers, both to prevent the nation from rallying and to secure sources of supplies.

Moral effects of Judæa's position.

To have followed these campaigns, the details of which are known to us, is to understand more clearly what, indeed, this province herself tells you by mute eloquence of rock, mountain and desert,—her value to the great people for whom she was shaped by the Creator's hands. Judæa was designed to produce in her inhabitants the sense of seclusion and security, though not to such a degree as to relieve them from the attractions of the great world, which throbbed closely past, or to relax in them those habits of

[1] iv. *Wars*, vii. 3; on the capture of Jamnia and Ashdod, iv. *Wars*, iii. 2; strongholds of Idumæa, viii. 1; Jericho, 2 ff.; Jericho and Hadida, ix. 1; Hebron with the unknown Kaphethra and Kepharabis, 9.

discipline, vigilance and valour, which are the necessary elements of a nation's character. In the position of Judæa there was not enough to tempt her people to put their confidence in herself; but there was enough to encourage them to the defence of their freedom and a strenuous life.[1] And while the isolation of their land was sufficient to confirm the truth of their calling to a discipline and a destiny separate from other peoples, it was not so complete as to keep them in barbarian ignorance of the world, or to release them from those temptations to mix with the world, in combating which their discipline and their destiny could alone be realised.

Illustrated from the Prophets and Psalms.

All this receives exact illustration from both Psalmists and Prophets. They may rejoice in the fertility of their land, but they never boast of its strength. On the contrary, of the real measure of the latter they show a singularly sagacious appreciation. Thus, Isaiah's fervid faith in Zion's inviolableness does not blind him to the openness of Judah's northern entrance: it is in one of his passages of warmest exultation about Zion that he describes the easy advance of the Assyrian to her walls.[2] Both he and other prophets frequently recognise how swiftly the great military powers will overrun Judah; and when they except Jerusalem from the consequences, it is not because of her natural strength, but by their faith in the direct intervention of God Himself. So at last it happened. In the great crisis of her history, the invasion by Sennacherib, Judah was saved, as England was saved from the Armada, neither by the strength of her

[1] In the *Least of all Lands*, Principal Miller has some very valuable remarks upon the influence of the physical geography of Palestine upon the character of the people.

[2] Isaiah x. 32. See p. 292 of this volume.

bulwarks, for they had all been burst, nor by the valour of her men, for the heart had gone from them, but because, apart from human help, God Himself crushed her insolent foes in the moment of their triumph.[1]

Of all this feeling, perhaps the most concise expression is found in the Forty-Eighth Psalm, where, though *beautiful for situation is Mount Zion in the sides of the north*,[2] and *established for ever*, it is *God* Himself who *is known in her palaces for a refuge;* and when the writer has *walked about Zion and gone round about her*, and *told the towers thereof*, *marked well her bulwarks* and *considered her palaces*, it is yet not in all these that he triumphs, but this is the result of his survey: *this God is our God for ever and ever, He will be our Guide even unto death.* Judah was not impregnable, but she was better—she was in charge of an invincible Providence.

With their admission of the weakness of Judah's position, there runs through the prophets an appreciation of her unattractiveness, and that leads them, and especially Isaiah, to insist that under God her security lies in this and in her people's contentment with this. Though they recognise how vulnerable the land is, the prophets maintain that she will be left alone if her people are quiet upon her, and if her statesmen avoid intrigue with the powers of the world. To the kings of Israel, to Ahaz, to Hezekiah's counsellors, to Josiah, the same warnings are given:[3]

[1] See p. 236. 2 Kings xviii, xix.; Isaiah xxxvii., and probably xxxiii.

[2] Perhaps a phrase for the sacredness and inviolableness of the site; but it is a remarkable fact that, owing to the strong sun (perhaps also to the geological formation), the northern aspect of all hills in Western Palestine is more fruitful and beautiful than the aspect towards the south; Ebal and Gerizim are an instance of this.

[3] Ahaz, cf. 2 Kings xvi. with Isaiah vii

Asshur shall not save us: we will not ride upon horses.[1] *Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help, and stay on horses and trust in chariots. In returning and rest shall ye be saved: in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength.*[2]

Thus we see how the physical geography of Palestine not only makes clear such subordinate things as the campaigns and migrations of the Old Testament, but signalises the providence of God, the doctrine of His prophets, and the character He demanded from His people. It was a great lesson the Spirit taught Israel, that no people dwells secure apart from God, from character, from common-sense. But the land was the illustration and enforcement of this lesson. Judæa proved, yet did not exhaust, nor tempt men to feel that she exhausted, the will and power of God for their salvation. As the writer of the Hundred and Twenty-First Psalm feels, her hills were not the answer to, but the provocation of, the question, *Whence cometh my help?* and Jehovah Himself was the answer. As for her prophets, a great part of their sagacity is but the true appreciation of her position. And as for the character of her people, while she gave them room to be free and to worship God, and offered no inducement to them to put herself in His place, she did not wholly shut them off from danger or temptation, for without danger and temptation it is impossible that a nation's character should be strong.

[1] Hosea xiv. 3, cf. xii. 1.

[2] Isaiah xxxi. 1, xxx. 15.

CHAPTER XV

THE CHARACTER OF JUDÆA



For this Chapter consult Maps I. and IV.

THE CHARACTER OF JUDÆA

WE have seen how much of Judæa is borderland, and how strongly this fact has determined her history. But after all it is the plateau, which her bulwarks so lift and isolate from the rest of Palestine, that remains the most characteristic part of Judæa. Here lay all her chief towns, and here her people were most distinctively themselves. This plateau is little more than thirty-five miles long, from Bethel to the group of cities south-east of Hebron. The breadth varies from fourteen to seventeen, when reckoned from the western edge, above the valley that cuts off the Shephelah, to where on the east the level drops below 1700 feet and into desert.

The Judæan Table-land.

The greater part of the Judæan plateau consists of stony moorland, upon which rough scrub and thorns, reinforced by a few dwarf oaks, contend with multitudes of boulders, and the limestone, as if impatient of the thin pretence of soil, breaks out in bare scalps and prominences. There are some patches of cultivation, but though the grain springs bravely from them, they seem more beds of shingle than of soil. The only other signs of life, besides the wild bee and a few birds, are flocks of sheep and goats, or a few cattle, cropping far apart in

melancholy proof of the scantiness of the herbage. Where the plateau rolls, the shadeless slopes are for the most part divided between brown scrub and grey rock ; the hollows are stony fields traversed by dry torrent-beds of dirty boulders and gashed clay. Where the plateau breaks, low ridge and shallow glen are formed, and the ridge is often crowned by a village, of which the grey stone walls and mud roofs look from the distance like a mere outcrop of the rock ; yet round them, or below in the glen, there will be olive-groves, figs, and perhaps a few terraces of vines. Some of these breaks in the table-land are very rich in vegetation, as at Bethany, the Valley of Hinnom, the Gardens of Solomon and other spots round Bethlehem, and in the neighbourhood of Hebron, the famous Vale of Eshcol or Vine Cluster. And again between Hebron and the wilderness there are nine miles by three of plateau, where the soil is almost free from stones, and the fair, red and green fields, broken by a few heathy mounds, might be a scene of upland agriculture in our own country.[1] This is where Ma'on, Ziph, and the Judæan Carmel lay with the farms of Nabal, on which David and his men, like the

[1] 'At 2.30 we left Hebron. Rough limestone country. Paths execrable, slippery rock and rolling stones. In an hour we came out on the Ziph-Maon-Carmel plateau, very like a bit of higher and less fertile Aberdeenshire —rolling red ground, mostly bare, partly wheat and barley, broken by limestone scalps partly covered by scrub, and honeycombed by caves. We came on this at Tell Zif (Ziph), cantered across it one and a half hours to Kurmul, with ruins of Crusaders' Castle, large bright blue pool below. Black Bedawee tents near. Thence a twenty minutes' canter to Ma'an through barley-fields. The view from Maon is very extensive. The fine plateau spreads due N., higher hills sweep round two sides from SW. to NE. ; due N. at the mouth of an opening through them is Hebron with its white buildings, the mosque clear through a glass. WNW. Yuttah on a peak, NE. Beni Nain. E. a decisive fall of about 400 feet from the cultivated land to the desert, and thence Jeshimon, rolling hills and irregular ridges backed by the range of Moab.'—*Extract from Diary.*

Bedouin of to-day, levied blackmail from Horeshah in the wilderness below.[1]

But the prevailing impression of Judæa is of stone—the torrent-beds, the paths that are no better, the heaps and heaps of stones gathered from the fields, the fields as stony still, the moors strewn with boulders, the obtrusive scalps and ribs of the hills. In the more desolate parts, which had otherwise been covered with scrub, this impression is increased by the ruins of ancient cultivation—cairns, terrace-walls, and vineyard towers.

Its featurelessness.

Now if you aggravate this stony appearance by two other deficiencies of feature, you will feel to the full that dreariness which most bring away with them as their whole memory of Judæa. First, there is no water. No tarns break here into streams and quicken the landscape, as they quicken even the most desolate moors of our north, but at noon the cattle go down by dusty paths to some shadowless gorge, where the glare is only broken by the black mouth of a cistern with troughs round it. On the whole plateau the only gleams of water are the pools at Gibeon, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Hebron, and I do not suppose that from Bethel to Beersheba there are, even in spring-time, more than six or seven tiny rills. No water to soothe the eye, there are no great hills to lift it. The horizon has no character or edge. Of course from the western boundary

[1] בחרשה: E. V. *in the wood*, 1 Sam. xxiii. 15. But this rendering implies both a very unusual grammatical form, and *a wood*, or even *thicket*, if it existed in these desert regions, would be too prominent to be used as a hiding-place. The LXX. understood a proper name, though they spelt it differently (Josephus follows LXX.). Conder discovered south-east of Ziph, and in the desert, the Ruin Khoreisa and the Wady Abu Hirsh, in both of which he sees the name Horeshah, *T. W.*, 243 f.

of the plateau you see the blue ocean with its border of broken gold, and from the eastern boundary the Moab Hills, that change their colours all day long above the changeless blue of the Dead Sea. But, in the centre of the hill-country of Judæa, there is nothing to look to past the featureless roll of the moorland, and the low blunt hills with the flat-roofed villages.

Was the land always like this? For answer, we have three portraits of ancient Judah. The first is perhaps the most voluptuous picture in the Old Testament:[1]

Binding to the vine his foal
And to the choice vine his ass's colt,
He hath washed in wine his raiment,
And in the blood of the grape his vesture:
—Heavy in the eyes from wine,
And white of teeth from milk.

Old Testament portraits of Judah.

This might be the portrait of a Bacchus breaking from the vineyards of Sicily; but of Judah we can scarcely believe it, as we stand in his land to-day. And yet on those long, dry slopes with their ruined terraces—no barer than the banks of Rhine in early spring—and even more in the rich glens around Hebron and Bethlehem, where the vine has been preserved,[2] we perceive still the possibilities of such a portrait. *Heavy in the eyes from wine*, and *he hath washed in wine his raiment*—but Judah has lost his eyes, and his raiment is in rags. The Judæan landscape of to-day is liker the second portrait which Isaiah drew in prospect of the

[1] Gen. xlix. On milk and wine, cf. Additional Notes to Fourth Edition.

[2] Until the recent revival of vineyards by foreigners, Hebron and Bethlehem were almost the only places in the Holy Land where wine was made. The grapes of Es-Salt have always been turned into raisins.

Assyrian invasion. *In that day shall the Lord shave, with a razor that is hired, the head and the hair of the feet and the beard. And it shall be in that day, a man shall nourish a young cow and a couple of sheep ; and it shall be, because of the abundance of the making of milk, he shall eat butter, —for butter and honey shall everything eat which is left in the midst of the land. And it shall be in that day, that every place in which there were a thousand vines at a thousand silverlings—for briars and for thorns shall it be. . . . And all the hills that were digged with the mattock, thou shalt not come thither for fear of briars and thorns ; but it shall be for the sending forth of oxen and for the treading of sheep.*[1] With the exceptions named above, this is exactly the Judah of to-day. But we have a third portrait, by the prophet Jeremiah,[2] of what Judah should be after the Restoration from Exile, and in this it is remarkable that no reversion is promised to a high state of cultivation, with olives and vines as the luxuriant features of the country, but that her permanent wealth and blessing are conceived as pastoral. . . . *For I will bring again the captivity of the land as in the beginning, saith Jehovah. Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts: Again shall there be in this place—the Desolate, without man or even beast—and in all its cities, the habitation of shepherds couching their flocks. In the cities of the Mountain*, or *Hill-Country, of Judah, in the cities of the Shephelah, and in the cities of the Negeb, and in the land of Benjamin, and in the suburbs of Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, again shall the flocks pass upon the hands of him that telleth* them, *saith Jehovah.* Now, though other prospects of the restoration of Judah

[1] Isa. vii. 20 ff.

[2] Jer. xxxiii. 12, 13. The passage begins with ver. 10.

include husbandry and vine culture,[1] and though the Jews after the Exile speak of their property as vineyards, olive-yards and cornland, along with sheep,[2] yet the prevailing aspect of Judah is pastoral, and the fulfilment of Jacob's luscious blessing must be sought for in the few fruitful corners of the land, and especially at Hebron. As Judah's first political centre, Hebron would in the time of her supremacy be the obvious model for the nation's ideal figure.[3]

Three characteristics of Judæa.

But this has already brought us to the first of those three features of Judæa's geography which are most significant in her history—her pastoral character, her neighbourhood to the desert, her singular unsuitableness for the growth of a great city. With these the rest of this chapter will be occupied.

1. A Land of Shepherds.

1. If, as we have seen, the prevailing character of Judæa be pastoral, with husbandry only incidental to her life, it is not surprising that the forms which have impressed both her history and her religion upon the world should be those of the pastoral habit. Her

[1] Micah iv. 4 and 1 Kings iv. 25 give the ideal state, as *every man under his own vine and fig-tree.* Jeremiah (xxxi. 24) in his picture of the future, places husbandmen before *them that go forth with flocks.* Habakkuk puts vines, figs, and olives before flocks, iii. 17. Isaiah (lxv. 10) says, *Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, and the valley of Achor a place for herds to couch, for My people that have sought Me;* but in ver. 21, *they shall plant vineyards,* cf. Isaiah lxi. 5, *strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen and vine-dressers.*

[2] Nehemiah v. Haggai speaks only of husbandry. Malachi sees both flocks and vines. Joel catalogues corn, wine and oil, figs, pomegranates, palms, and apples (chap. i.). With him cattle and herds are in the background. New wine and milk are the blessings of the future, iii. 18.

[3] One is tempted to ask whether any inference as to the date of Gen. xlix. can be drawn from its representation of Judah as chiefly a wine-growing country ; but I do not think any such inference would be at all trustworthy, as may be seen from a comparison of the passages cited in the above notes.

origin ; more than once her freedom and power of political recuperation ; more than once her prophecy ; her images of God, and her sweetest poetry of the spiritual life, have been derived from this source. It is the stateliest shepherds of all time whom the dawn of history reveals upon her fields—men not sprung from her own remote conditions, nor confined to them, but moving across the world in converse with great empires, and bringing down from heaven truths sublime and universal to wed with the simple habits of her life. These were the patriarchs of the nation. The founder of its one dynasty, and the first of its literary prophets, were also *taken from following the flocks.*[1] The king and every true leader of men was called a shepherd. Jehovah was the Shepherd of His people, and they the sheep of His pasture. It was in Judæa that Christ called Himself the Good Shepherd, as it was in Judæa also that, taking the other great feature of her life, He said He was the True Vine.[2]

Judæa, indeed, offers as good ground as there is in all the East for observing the grandeur of the shepherd's character. On the boundless Eastern pasture, so different from the narrow meadows and dyked hillsides with which we are familiar, the shepherd is indispensable. With us, sheep are often left to themselves ; but I do not remember ever to have seen in the East a flock of sheep without a shepherd. In such a landscape as Judæa, where a day's pasture is thinly scattered over an unfenced tract of country, covered with delusive paths, still frequented by wild beasts, and rolling off into the desert, the man and his character are indispensable. On some high moor,

[1] 2 Sam. vii. 8 ; Amos vii. 15.

[2] Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*, xiii.

across which at night the hyenas howl, when you meet him, sleepless, far-sighted, weather-beaten, armed, leaning on his staff, and looking out over his scattered sheep, every one of them on his heart, you understand why the shepherd of Judæa sprang to the front in his people's history; why they gave his name to their king, and made him the symbol of Providence; why Christ took him as the type of self-sacrifice.

Sometimes we enjoyed our noonday rest beside one of those Judæan wells, to which three or four shepherds come down with their flocks. The flocks mixed with each other, and we wondered how each shepherd would get his own again. But after the watering and the playing were over, the shepherds one by one went up different sides of the valley, and each called out his peculiar call; and the sheep of each drew out of the crowd to their own shepherd, and the flocks passed away as orderly as they came. *The shepherd of the sheep, . . . when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice, and a stranger will they not follow. I am the Good Shepherd, and know My sheep, and am known of Mine.* These words our Lord spake in Judæa.

2. With the pastoral character of the hill-country of Judæa we may take its neighbourhood to the desert—the wilderness of Judæa. In the Old Testament this land is called the Jeshimon, a word meaning *devastation*,[1] and no term could better suit its haggard and crumbling appearance. It covers some thirty-five miles by fifteen. We came upon it from Maon. The

2. Neighbour to the desert.

[1] In Deut. xxxii. 10, it is applied to the great Arabian Desert, from which God brought Israel, the waste and howling wilderness, תהו וילל ישימון. See p. 86.

cultivated land to the east of Hebron sinks quickly to rolling hills and waterless vales, covered by broom and grass, across which it took us all forenoon to ride. The wells are very few, and almost all cisterns of rain-water, jealously guarded through the summer by their Arab owners.[1] For an hour or two more we rode up and down steep ridges, each barer than the preceding, and then descended rocky slopes to a wide plain, where we left behind the last brown grass and thistle; the last flock of goats we had passed two hours before. Short bushes, thorns, and succulent creepers were all that relieved the brown and yellow bareness of the sand, the crumbling limestone, and scattered shingle. The strata were contorted; ridges ran in all directions; distant hills to north and south looked like gigantic dust-heaps; those near we could see to be torn as if by waterspouts. When we were not stepping on detritus, the limestone was blistered and peeling. Often the ground sounded hollow; sometimes rock and sand slipped in large quantity from the tread of the horses; sometimes the living rock was bare and jagged, especially in the frequent gullies, that therefore glowed and beat with heat like furnaces. Far to the east ran the Moab hills, and in front of them we got glimpses of the Dead Sea, the deep blue of which was a most refreshing sight across the desert foreground. So we rode for two hours, till the sea burst upon us in all its length, and this chaos, which we had traversed, tumbled and broke, down 1200 feet of limestone, flint and marl—crags, corries and precipices—to the broad beach of the water. Such is Jeshimon, the wilderness of Judæa. It

The wilderness of Judæa.

[1] The *P. E. F. Survey* map shows that almost the only names in this part of Judæa are compounded with Bîr, 'cistern.'

carries the violence and desolation of the Dead Sea Valley right up to the heart of the country, to the roots of the Mount of Olives, to within two hours of the gates of Hebron, Bethlehem, and Jerusalem.

When you realise that this howling waste came within reach of nearly every Jewish child ; when you climb the Mount of Olives, or any hill about Bethlehem, or the hill of Tekoa, and, looking east, see those fifteen miles of chaos, sinking to a stretch of the Dead Sea, you begin to understand the influence of the desert on Jewish imagination and literature. It gave the ancient natives of Judæa, as it gives the mere visitor of to-day, the sense of living next door to doom ; the sense of how narrow is the border between life and death ; the awe of the power of God, who can make contiguous regions so opposite in character. *He turneth rivers into a wilderness, and watersprings into a thirsty ground.* The desert is always in face of the prophets, and its howling of beasts and its dry sand blow mournfully across their pages the foreboding of judgment.

But this is not the only influence of the desert. Meteoric effects are nowhere in Palestine so simple or so brilliant. And there is the annual miracle, when, after the winter rains, even these wastes take on a glorious green. Hence the sudden rushes of light and life across the prophet's vision ; it is from the desert that he mostly borrows his imagery of the creative, instantaneous Divine grace. *The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them : the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.*

Two, at least, of the prophets were born in face of the wilderness of Judæa—Amos and Jeremiah—and on both it has left its fascination. Amos lived to the south

of Jerusalem, at Tekoa. No one can read his book without feeling that he haunted heights, and lived in the face of very wide horizons. But from Tekoa you see the exact scenery of his visions. The slopes on which Amos herded his cattle show the mass of desert hills with their tops *below* the spectator, and therefore displaying every meteoric effect in a way they could not have done had he been obliged to look *up* to them. The cold wind that blows off them after sunset; through a gap the Dead Sea, with its heavy mists; beyond the gulf the range of Moab, cold and grey, till the sun leaps from behind his barrier, and in a moment the world of hill-tops below Tekoa is flooded with light—that was the landscape of Amos. *Lo, He that formeth the mountains, and createth the wind, and declareth unto man what is his thought; that maketh the morning darkness, and treadeth on the high places of the earth, Jehovah, God of Hosts, is His name; that maketh the Seven Stars and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into morning, and maketh the day dark with night; that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out on the face of the earth—Jehovah is His name.*

Amos and Tekoa.

Jeremiah grew up at Anathoth, a little to the north-east of Jerusalem, across Scopus, and over a deep valley. It is the last village eastward, and from its site the land falls away in broken, barren hills to the north end of the Dead Sea. The vision of that desert maze was burnt into the prophet's mind, and he contrasted it with the clear, ordered Word of God. *O generation, see ye the word of the Lord: Have I been a wilderness unto Israel, a land of darkness?*[1] He had lived in face of the scorching desert air—*A dry wind of the high places in the*

Jeremiah and Anathoth.

[1] Jer. ii. 31.

wilderness toward the daughter of My people, not to fan nor to cleanse. And in face of the chaotic prospect, he described judgment in these terms: *I beheld the earth, and lo, it was without form and void . . . I beheld, and lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness . . . at the presence of Jehovah, by His fierce anger.*[1]

But the wilderness affected Judæa by more than its neighbourhood. There can be little doubt but that the more austere and fanatic temper of the Jew was begotten in him by the absorption of such desert tribes as the Kenites. Israel was everywhere a mixed race, but while in Samaria and Galilee the foreign constituents were mostly Canaanite, in Judæa they were mostly Arabian.[2]

The wilderness of Judæa played also a great part in her history as the refuge of political fugitives and religious solitaries — a part which it still continues. The story of Saul's hunt after David, and of David's narrow escapes, becomes very vivid among those tossed and broken hills, where the valleys are all alike, and large bodies of men may camp near each other without knowing it. Ambushes are everywhere possible, and alarms pass rapidly across the bare and silent hills. You may travel for hours, and feel as solitary as at sea without a sail in sight; but if you are in search of any one, your guide's signal will make men leap from slopes that did not seem to shelter a rabbit, and if you are suspected, your passage may be stopped by a dozen men, as if they had sprung from the earth.[3]

The wilderness as a refuge.

We cannot pass from the wilderness of Judæa without remembering two more holy events of which it was the scene. Here John was prepared for his austere mission,

[1] Jer. iv. 11, 23, 26. [2] Wellhausen, *De Gentibus*, etc. [3] See p. 272 f.

and found his figures of judgment. Here you understand his own description of his preaching—like a desert fire when the brown grass and thorns on the more fertile portions will blaze for miles, and the unclean reptiles creep out of their holes before its heat: *O generation of vipers, who hath taught you to flee from the wrath to come?* And here our Lord suffered His temptation. *Straightway the Spirit driveth Him into the wilderness.* For hours, as you travel across these hills, you may feel no sign of life, except the scorpions and vipers which your passage startles, in the distance a few wild goats or gazelles, and at night the wailing of the jackal and the hyena's howl. *He was alone with the wild beasts.*

John Baptist and Christ.

3. But the most impressive fact about Judæa—at least in face of her history—is her natural unfitness for the growth of a great city.

All the townships of Judæa were either fortresses, shrines, or country villages. The fortresses we have already seen on the borders, chiefly on the west and north. And on the western border we have seen one of the shrines—Kiriath Jearim, or Baalath-Jehuda. The agricultural townships lay chiefly on the east,—Tekoa and the group of cities on the fertile plateau south-east of Hebron.[1] But up the centre of the plateau ran a road, and all the places of greatest importance lay upon it—Beersheba, Kiriath Sepher, Hebron, Bethlehem, Jerusalem, and Bethel. Of these, Beersheba (as we have seen), Hebron, and Bethel were sanctuaries long before Israel entered the land; and Jerusalem, from the earliest times, had been a fortress and probably also a shrine. Hebron and Beth-

3. Judæa's unfitness for the growth of a city.

Hebron.

[1] Eshtemoa', Ma'on, Carmel, Juttah, Ziph, Januah, etc.

lehem, the two earliest seats of Judah, have the greatest natural possibilities. Ancient Hebrón lay on a hill to the north-west of the present site; it commands an entrance to the higher plateau, and it is within hail of the desert, which means trade with Arabs. The valleys about it are very fruitful. Like so many ancient towns, Hebron must have combined the attractions of a market and a shrine.[1]

Beth-lehem.

Beth-lehem-Ephratah was no shrine, but, as its double name implies, it lies in the midst of a district of great fertility, with water not far away.[2] The position is one of considerable strength, and not far from that citadel which Herod the Great made famous under his own name. Beth-lehem, indeed, though *too*

[1] The origin of Hebron is obscure. In the Hexateuch it is mentioned by all the documents. First J informs us that its earlier name was Kiriath Arba', and Kaleb drave from it three sons of 'Anak, Sheshai, Ahiman, Tolmai (Judges i. 10, 20; Num. xiii. 22; cf. Josh. xv. 4. According to Josh. xi. 21, Joshua had cut off the Anakim from Hebron). J also tells us that *Hebron was built seven years before Zoan* (Num. xiii. 22), but which building of Zoan? J mentions *the terebinths of Mamre*, but does not identify them with Hebron (Gen. xiii. 18, xviii. 1). E confirms J: Hebron was earlier called *Kiriath* (*city of*) *'Arba': he was the mightiest man among the Anakîm* (Josh. xiv. 15). A verse assigned to the Redactor calls Arba' *the father of Anak* (Josh. xv. 13; cf. xxi. 11). E also puts Vale of Eshcol near Hebron (Num. xiii. 23). P identifies Kiriath Arba' and Hebron (Gen. xxiii. 2, Josh. xx. 7, a city of refuge; cf. xxi. 13); it also identifies Mamre (the sacred terebinths of which it does not mention) with Hebron (Gen. xxiii. 19, etc., xxxv. 27. According to xxv. 9, xlix. 30, l. 13, Macpelah lies in front of Mamre). In Gen. xxxv. 27, 'Arba' bears the article, *City of the 'Arba'*, or *of the Four*, and so in Neh. xi. 25. In Gen. xiv. 13, 24, a chapter not assignable to any of the documents, Mamre is called the Amorite and brother to Eshcol and Aner. In Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Hebron is the only name given to the city:—1 Sam. xxx. 31, 2 Sam. ii. 1, etc.; iii. 2, 32; iv. 1-12, v. 1-13; xv. 7, 10, Absalom's vow in Hebron, and his revolt there; 1 Chron. ii. 42, Mareshah, father of Hebron, 43, Korah, Tappuah, Rekem, Shema, sons of Hebron: vi. 55, 57, Hebron given to sons of Aaron; 2 Chron. xi. 10, fortified by Rehoboam; 1 Macc. v. 65, destroyed by Judas in campaign against Edomites.

[2] Mr. Tomkins (*P.E.F.Q.*, 1885, 112) suggests that Beth-lehem was originally the sacred place of Lakhmu, a Chaldean god of fertility (Smith,

little to be placed among the families of Judah, is the finest site in the whole province.

Yet neither Beth-lehem nor Hebron, nor any other part of that plateau, bears tokens of civic promise. Throughout Judæa these are absolutely lacking. She has no harbours, no river, no great trunk-road, no convenient market for the nations on either side of her. In their commerce with each other, these pass by Judæa, finding their emporiums in the cities of Philistia, or, as of old, at Petra and Bosra on the east of the Jordan. Gaza has outdone Hebron as the port of the desert. Jerusalem is no match for Shechem in fertility or convenience of site. The whole plateau stands aloof, waterless, on the road to nowhere. There are none of the natural conditions of a great city.

And yet it was here that She arose who, more than Athens and more than Rome, taught the nations civic

Chald. Genesis, 58, 60), and compares Lahmi (1 Chron. xx. 5). Lahmam, the present El Lahm, was near Beit-Jibrin. Had Beth-lehem, however, been originally a shrine, some trace of it must have survived in the Old Testament, and there is none. 'House of Bread' is a natural name for so fertile a site, and it has continued into Arabic, in which, however, the same letters mean 'house of meat.' In J E it is called *Ephrath, that is B.* (Gen. xxxv. 16, 19; cf. xlviii. 7 R). Ibzan, a minor judge, sprang from it (Judges xii. 8-10). In Judges xvii. 7, xix. 1, 2, etc., it is called *B. in Judah*; in Ruth i. 1, etc., *B. Judah*, or *B.* alone. So in 1 and 2 Sam., *passim*. 1 Chron. xi. 16, Jer. xli. 17, they came to *the inn of Kimham, which is by B., to go and to enter into Egypt*. Micah v. 2, *B. Ephratah*, though thou be too *small to be among the families of Judah*. The natives were called Ephrathites (Ruth i. 2, 1 Sam. xvii. 12). But in Judges xii. 5, 1 Sam. i. 1, 1 Kings xi. 26, Ephrathite = Ephraimite. Herod's citadel near Beth-lehem was the Herodium, now the Jebel Fureîdis, or Frank Mountain, from its use by the Crusaders after the capture of Jerusalem (Felix Fabri, ed. *P.P.T.* ii. 403 f.). Conder suggests Fureîdis = a corruption of Herodium (cf. Furbia = Herbia). Herod is buried here. On the strong reasons for supposing that the Church of the Nativity occupies the site of the inn, see Conder, *T. W.* ch. x., Henderson's *Palestine*, p. 149.

justice, and gave her name to the ideal city men are ever striving to build on earth, to the City of God that shall one day descend from heaven—the New Jerusalem. For her builder was not Nature nor the wisdom of men, but on that secluded and barren site, the Word of God, by her prophets, laid her eternal foundations in righteousness, and reared her walls in her people's faith in God.

CHAPTER XVI

SAMARIA

For this Chapter consult Maps I., V. and VI.



SAMARIA.

REFERENCE TO COLOURING
CONTOURS SHOWING HEIGHT OF LAND

Above 3000 feet
3000 Feet
2000
1500
1000
500
0
Level of Mediterranean Sea
600
1000
1292
Level of Dead Sea
DEPRESSION

MEDITERRANEAN SEA

PLAIN OF SHARON

SAMARIA

Mount Ephraim

EL GHOR

SCALE 4 MILES TO AN INCH
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Railways
Roads

London, Hodder and Stoughton

SAMARIA

FROM Judæa we pass to Samaria. Halves of the same mountain range, how opposite they are in disposition and in history! The northern is as fair and open as the southern is secluded and austere, and their fortunes correspond. To the prophets Samaria is the older sister,[1] standing nearer to the world, taking precedence alike in good and evil. The more forward to attract, the more quick to develop, Samaria was always the less able to retain. The patriarchs came first to Shechem, but chose their homes about Hebron; the earliest seats of Israel's worship, the earliest rallies of her patriotism, were upon Mount Ephraim,[2] but both Church and State ultimately centred in Jerusalem; after the disruption of the kingdom the first prophets and heroes sprang up in the richer life of Northern Israel, but the splendour and endurance both of prophecy and of kingship remained with Judæa. And so, though we owe to Samaria some of the finest of Israel's national lyrics, she produced no literature of patriotism, but the bulk of the literature about her is full of scorn for her traffic with foreigners, for her luxury and her tolerance of many idols. 'Pride, fulness of bread and prosperous ease,' then rotten-

Samaria and Judæa—a contrast.

[1] Jer. iii.; Ezek. xvi. 46, and especially xxiii.

[2] *He blew a trumpet in Mount Ephraim*, Judges iii. 27. *Palm-tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in Mount Ephraim*, iv. 5; cf. vi. 11.

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SAMARIA

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ness and swift ruin, are the chief notes of prophecy concerning her. And so to-day, while pilgrims throng on either hand to Judæa and to Galilee, none seek Samaria save for one tiny spot of her surface—that was neither a birthplace nor a tomb nor a battle-field nor a city, but the scene of a wayside saying by Him who used this land only as a passenger.

But if hardly Holy Land—if hardly even national land—there is no region of Syria more interesting and romantic. The traveller, entering from Judæa, is refreshed by a far fairer landscape. When he reaches the Vale of Shechem he finds himself at the true physical centre of Palestine, from which the features of the whole country radiate and group themselves most clearly. Historical memories, too, burst about the paths of Samaria more lavishly than even those fountains, which render her such a contrast to Judæa —the altars at Shechem and Shiloh, the fields round Dothan, the palm-tree of Deborah, the winepress of Ophrah, Carmel and Gilboa, the columns in Samaria, the vineyard of Naboth, the gates of Jezreel and Bethshan, the fords of Jordan ; the approach of the patriarchs, Elijah's apparitions, Elisha passing to and fro, John baptizing at Ænon near to Salim ; Ahab and Herod ; Gideon's campaign, Jehu's furious driving, Judith and Holofernes, battles of the Maccabees, the strategy of Pompey and of Vespasian.

The borders of Samaria.

It has been already shown how the southern frontier of Samaria gradually receded from the Vale of Ajalon to the Wady Ishar and 'Akrabbeh.[1] The northern was more fixed, and lay from the Mediterranean to Jordan, along the south edge of Esdraelon, by the foot of Carmel and Gilboa. If we shut off Carmel, the edge of

[1] See pp. 249-256.

Sharon may be taken as the western boundary ; the eastern was Jordan. These limits enclose a territory nearly square, or some forty miles north and south by thirty-five east and west—the size of an average English shire.[1]

The earliest name given to this section of the Central Range (we exclude Carmel) was *Mount Ephraim* :[2] just as the whole table-land of Judah was called *Mount Judah*.[3] When you stand off the country you see, as you do not when travelling within it, the propriety of the singular name *mount*. Broken up as Samaria is into more or less isolated groups of hills, yet when you view her from Gilead, or from the Mediterranean, she presents the aspect of a single mountain *massif*, with entrances indeed, but apparently as compact as even the table-land of Judæa.

Mount Ephraim.

Take first the western flank. Here from summits of 3000 feet, and an average watershed of 2000, Mount Ephraim descends upon Sharon by uninterrupted ridges.

[1] See p. 260. The exact distances are these. From Bethel to Jezreel, 42 miles ; from the edge of Sharon to Jordan varies between 33 and 36 miles ; but from the point of Carmel to Bethshan is 40 miles ; and to the south-east corner of the province (east of Bethel) about 67 miles. Without Carmel Samaria is about 1400 square miles ; Carmel represents about 180 or 200 more. Judæa, it may be remembered, was estimated at 2000 square miles, of which only about 1400 were habitable.

[2] הַר אֶפְרָיִם, Josh. xvii. 15, xix. 50, etc. Judges iii. 27, iv. 5, etc. ; 1 Sam. i. 1, ix. 4, etc. That the whole district known as Samaria is covered by the name is proved by the fact that between Ramah and Bethel is styled as being in Mount Ephraim (Judges iv. 5) ; also Shechem (1 Kings xii. 25 ; Josh. xx. 7, etc.) ; and that in Jer. xxxi. 6, Mount Ephraim stands parallel to Mountains of Samaria (v. 5). Of course the name spread originally from the hill-country immediately north of Benjamin's territory, which fell to the tribe of Ephraim, and in which we must seek for the site of the *city called Ephraim* (2 Chron. xiii. 19, 2 Sam. xiii. 23, John xi. 54)—perhaps the modern et-Taiyibeh.

[3] Josh. xxi. 11, where it is translated *hill-country of Judah*.

The general aspect of the slope is 'rocky and sterile;' with infrequent breaks of olive-woods,[1] fields, and a few villages. This bareness is not because of steepness; on the contrary, the descent, which is unbroken, is also gradual—only some 1800 feet in eighteen miles. The whole flank lies in contrast to the border of precipices and defiles which runs down the west of Judæa; and, whether you ascend by its valleys or by its broad ridges, you find the way easy and open. That little history was enacted upon this flank of Mount Ephraim seems to be due to—besides the comparative sterility of the soil—the impossibility of anywhere making a stand, the uselessness of anywhere building a fortress.

The western flank.

On the water-parting, the one pass conspicuous from the sea is that in which Shechem lies between Ebal and Gerizim. It crosses to the eastern side of the range, and is thence continued by a valley with a strong southerly trend, the present Wady el Ifjim, which runs out upon the Jordan below the Horn or Promontory of Surtabeh, and divides the eastern flank of Mount Ephraim into two distinct sections. South of the Wady el Ifjim, Mount Ephraim presents to Eastern Palestine a high bulwark of mountain closely piled, with wild corries running up it—the most difficult corner of the whole frontier. Seen from Nebo it looks inaccessible. The descent is over 2800 feet in nine miles, or three times the gradient of the western flank. But north of the Wady el Ifjim and the Horn of Surtabeh, the flank of Mount Ephraim opens, and a series of broad valleys descend through it from the interior. From the water-parting the level drops 2500 feet in ten miles. Opposite the centre of

The eastern flank.

[1] Robinson, *L.R.*, 135.

the province the hills fall close on Jordan, but farther north they recede to a distance of five miles, and at Beth-shan they turn away westward in the range of Gilboa, leaving the valley of Jezreel to run up on the north of them towards the Mediterranean.

Within these compact bulwarks Mount Ephraim surprises us with the number of its plains, meadows, and spacious vales. These begin from the north, with the gap between Carmel and Gilboa, through which a broad gulf of Esdraelon gapes for seven miles to Jenîn. Thence a succession of level spaces, more or less connected, spreads southwards through the centre of the province to within a few miles of its southern border. First from Jenîn is the Plain of Dothan,[1] reached by an easy pass through low hills; thence another easy pass leads to a series of spacious meadows lying across the country from the south end of Mount Gilboa to the range of hills which bulwark the city of Samaria on the north;[2] and thence another easy pass leads to a third series of plains running south past the Vale of Shechem into the great Sahel Mukhneh opposite Gerizim. Now upon this succession of level lands running south from Esdraelon, there emerge valleys,—both those that come up from Sharon and those that come up from Jordan. Of the former the chief is the broad Barley-Vale, Wady esh

The central plains.

[1] The modern Sahel 'Arrabêh. Robinson (*Phys. Geogr.*, 122) describes it as a bay or offset of the Plain of Esdraelon; but it is separated from the latter by low hills. Wellhausen (*Hist.* p. 39) describes it as merging into Sharon, but a long pass connects them; see p. 151.

[2] Cf. *P.E.F. Mem.* ii. Samaria, 38. Trel. Saunders, *Introd. to Survey*, 136. The Plains of 'Arrabêh, Selhab and Zebâbdeh drain to the Mediterranean; the Merj el Ghuruk has no outlet. In May 1891, when we passed, it held a great shallow lake; cf. Robinson, *B.R.* iii. 153. The Mukhneh drains to Jordan.

Sha'îr, which sweeps up past Samaria upon Shechem. In this direction, too, the gentle ridges offer almost everywhere easy access from the coast. On the other side running down into Jordan, there are the Wady Far'ah, that winds from a little south of Shechem to opposite the Jabbok,—the trunk road to the east, and to-day partly the route of the telegraph wire from Nablus to Es-Salt; farther north the Bukeia, or Little-Dale; then the Salt-Vale, or Wady el Mâleh, that issues at Abel-Meholah, and, lastly, the Wady el Khashneh, with the ancient road from Shechem to Bethshan, up which came, perhaps Pompey, and certainly Vespasian. All these are *the outgoings of Mount Ephraim*,[1] broad, fertile, and of easy gradients. But besides these, and even where the mountains crowd most thickly together, in the south-east corner of the province there are frequent meadows and corn lands. Travellers from Judæa will remember the open vales which they crossed before they reached the Mukhneh; and of the less visited country to the east, Robinson says: 'It was a matter of surprise to us to find in this great *break-down* of the mountains so much good land; so many fine and arable, though not large, plains.'[2]

I. The Openness of Samaria.

I. Therefore the openness of Samaria is her most prominent feature, and tells most in her history. Few invaders were successfully resisted. It is a singular fact that we have no account of the invasion by Israel. Bethel falls, and after that the tribe of Joseph, to whom the region is allotted, express no fear, record no struggle, till they come to the Plain of Esdraelon and the cities of the Canaanites at Bethshan

[1] Josh. xvii. 18.

[2] *L.R.*, 296.

and Jezreel.[1] Under the invasion of the Canaanites, Israel's native law could be administered only in the extreme south-east, between Ramah and Bethel, where stood the palm-tree of Deborah.[2] In the days of Gideon the Midianites swept south from the Plain of Esdraelon, so that the use of the open threshing-floors was impossible even at Ophrah.[3] In Elisha's time, the Syrians, by apparently annual invasions, swept westward as far as the citadel of Samaria, behind the watershed. The Assyrians overwhelmed the land, and carried off the greater part of the population. In the Book of Judith Holofernes is represented as easily bringing in his army from Esdraelon by the series of plains described above.[4] Vespasian, seeking to blockade Judæa, marched from Antipatris by Shechem to Korea, and thence to Jericho and back again, and then to Gophna, Ephraim and back again, incredible as it seems, within a week.[5] And Titus came easily upon Jerusalem from Cæsarea past Gophna and Bethel.[6] How differently all this reads from the history of the invasion of Judæa through her narrow defiles—the sallies from the hills, the ambushes of the Wady 'Ali, the routs down by the two Beth-horons and Ajalon!

Chariot-driving.

One very interesting effect of the openness of Samaria is the frequency with which the chariot appears in her history. In the annals of Judah chariots are but seldom mentioned.[7] All the long drives of the Old Testament are in Samaria,—the race of Ahab

[1] Josh. xvii. 14. [2] Judges iv. 5.

[3] Perhaps Ferata, south-west from Shechem (Conder). Judges vi. 11.

[4] Bethulia must be sought for somewhere about the Merj el Ghuruk. See p. 356. [5] Jos. iv. *Wars*, viii., ix., x. [6] *Id.* v. *Wars*, ii. 1.

[7] See Appendix, on Roads and Wheeled Vehicles in Syria from the earliest times to the present.

against the storm from Mount Carmel to Jezreel;[1] his long funeral in his battle-chariot stained with his life-blood, from Ramoth-Gilead to Samaria, *and they washed his chariot by the pool of Samaria, and the dogs licked up his blood*;[2] the drive of Jehu from Ramoth-Gilead past Bethshan and up the valley of Jezreel, and as he came near, *the watchman in Jezreel told, saying, . . . the driving is like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi, for he driveth furiously; and Joram said, Yoke, and they yoked his chariot, and Joram king of Israel and Ahaziah king of Judah went out each in his chariot to meet Jehu, and found him in the portion of Naboth the Jezreelite*; the chariot race from there between Jehu and poor Ahaziah *by the way of the garden house, the ascent of Gur, which is by Ibleam*, where Ahaziah was smitten, and Megiddo, where he died, *and his servants carried him in a chariot to Jerusalem*;[3] Jehu's drive again from Jezreel to Samaria, *and he lighted on Jehonadab the son of Rechab coming to meet him, and he gave him his hand, and took him up into the chariot, and said, Come with me and see my zeal for the Lord*;[4] and the long drive of Naaman from Damascus, across the level Hauran, over Jordan and up Jezreel, *with his horses and his chariots*, to the house of Elisha, presumably at Samaria, and the drive back again, and the pursuit by Gehazi, and when *Naaman saw one running after him, he lighted down from his chariot to meet him*.[5] Contrast all this with the two meagre references to chariot-driving in Judæa—in the one case the chariot carried a corpse, in the other a dying man[6]—and you get an illustration of the difference between the

[1] 1 Kings xviii. 44 ff.
[2] 1 Kings xxii. 29 ff.
[3] 2 Kings ix. 16 ff.
[4] 2 Kings x. 12, 15 ff.
[5] 2 Kings v. 9 ff.
[6] 2 Kings ix. 28; 2 Chron. xxxv. 24.

level stretches of Samaria, and the steep, tortuous roads of her sister province. Perhaps the prophet intends to emphasise this contrast in his verse: *I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem.*[1]

Precocity of Samaria.

Far more important than chariots, more important even than the easy invasion by enemies, is that effect of Samaria's openness, to which allusion was made in the beginning of this chapter. Judæa, earning from outsiders little but contempt, inspired the people, whom she so carefully nursed in seclusion from the world, with a patriotism that has survived two thousand years of separation, and still draws her exiles from the fairest countries of the world to pour their tears upon her dust, though it be among the most barren the world contains. Samaria, fair and facile, lavished her favours on foreigners, and was oftener the temptation than the discipline, the betrayer than the guardian, of her own. The surrounding paganism poured into her ample life; and although to her was granted the honour of the first great victories against it—Gideon's and Elijah's—she suffered the luxury that came after to take away her crown. From Amos to Isaiah the sins she is charged with are those of a civilisation that has been ripe, and is rotten—drunkenness, clumsy art, servile imitation of foreigners, thoughtlessness and cruelty. For these she falls, and her summer beauty is covered by the mud of a great deluge. *The crown of the pride of the drunkards of Ephraim is trodden under foot, and the fading flower of his glorious beauty, which is on the head of the fat valley, shall be as the first ripe fig before the summer, which when he that hath caught sight of it, seeth it, while it is yet in his hand, he*

[1] Zech. ix. 10.

eateth it up.[1] Poor province, she grew ripe and was ravished before the real summer of her people!

II. The Central Position of Samaria.

II. The second characteristic of Samaria is her central and dominant position. Jerusalem has acquired such stupendous historical importance that we are apt to imagine her as the natural head and centre of the land. But nothing comes with greater surprise upon the visitor to Palestine than to discover that, with all her advantages of defence, Jerusalem lies on a barren and awkward site, and that both natural and historical precedence have to be given, not to Mount Zion and the City of David, but to Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim, with Shechem between them.

Shechem.

We have noticed how this suggests itself even before we touch the land. In the Central Range of Western Palestine, as seen from the sea, the only sign of a pass is that between Ebal and Gerizim, whose summits so conspicuously rise above the general level of the sky-line. It is the same on the other side of the land. Seen from Moab, the Central Range runs unbroken, save by the narrowest of corries. But stand farther north, on the hills of Gilead, opposite Ephraim—on Jebel 'Oshea, above Es-Salt, or on the high castle of Er-Rubad, above 'Ajlun—and there open to you across Jordan the mouths of valleys which run up to the great plains in front of Shechem. There is thus a pass right across Samaria, from the coast to Jordan, and just where it pierces the water-

[1] One interesting proof of how Samaria was permeable from the west is shown in Beit Dejan, *i.e.* the House of Dagon, the name of a village six and a half miles south-east of Shechem. Cf. also the name Amalek (Judges v. 14, xii. 15). This, however, is perhaps due to some Arab element which, like the Kenites in the south of Judah, entered the land along with Israel.

shed, with Ebal on one side and Gerizim on the other, Shechem lies at the parting of the waters, some of its fountains flowing seawards, the rest towards Jordan. Joppa, down an open incline, stands three or four miles nearer than to Jerusalem. Cæsarea is but thirty miles away; Jenîn, the gateway to Esdraelon, eighteen; Bethshan twenty-five; while none of the roads which fall directly to the east take more than eighteen miles to reach the fords of Jordan. We have also seen that from Mount Ebal all the chief features and most of the borders of the land are visible.[1] There is one other token to add. To-day Shechem is the seat of the government of the province, and—eloquent homage of civilisation to its immemorial rank—it is the connecting link of the telegraphic systems of the east and west of Jordan.

Historical proofs.

It is therefore in full harmony with the geographical data that the story of the patriarchs brings both Abraham and Jacob, on their entrance into the Promised Land, at once to Shechem,[2] and that the Book of Deuteronomy selects Ebal and Gerizim as the scene of a great inaugural service by all Israel on taking possession of the country—a service the performance of which the Book of Joshua duly records. Both of these passages, in Deuteronomy and in Joshua, are from the hands of a writer, the Deuteronomist, whose ruling principle is the centralisation of Israel's worship in one sanctuary, and that ostensibly Jerusalem. His mention of Ebal, therefore—and it is the only sacred site which he names—stands out in all the greater relief, as a proof of the

[1] Book I. ch. vi., The View from Mount Ebal.

[2] Abraham, Gen. xii. 6 (J); Jacob, Gen. xxxiii. 18 (P and probably also E, cf. xxxiv.).

natural attractiveness and central position of the district of Shechem.[1] After the disruption of Israel, these qualities of Shechem were not found to atone for her weakness as a fortress, and she soon ceased to be the capital of the Northern Kingdom. It was to the Samaritans that the district owed the revival of its claims to be considered the religious centre of the land. But this was in the interest of as narrow and exclusive a sectarianism as ever sought to monopolise the liberal intentions of nature. The abuse was gloriously atoned for. It was by this natural capital of the Holy Land, from which the outgoings to the world are so many and so open, that the religion of Israel rose once for all above every geographical limit, and the charter of a universal worship was given. *Neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father; but the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth.*[2]

[1] Deut. xxvii. and Josh. viii. 30 ff. The former is a very difficult chapter. It breaks the connection between xxvi. and xxviii., and is evidently compiled from several distinct narratives (Dillmann *in loco*, and Driver, *Introd.* 88). But these all agree that a great national service was to take place at Shechem soon after the crossing of Jordan, of which Josh. viii. 30 ff. (Deut.) recounts the performance in harmony with the Deuteronomist portions of Deut. xxvii. That the only sanctuary mentioned by the Book of Deuteronomy should be the capital of Samaria, is surely an element to be taken into consideration of the question whether that book arose out of an agitation in favour of a central sanctuary at Jerusalem. If it did, it is strange that Ebal is so honoured, while Jerusalem is not once mentioned.

[2] Among other assumptions, the Samaritans fixed on Gerizim as the site of the offering of Isaac, and this is supported by Stanley (*Sinai and Palestine*, note to ch. v.) on the ground that Gerizim is visible from a great distance, as Mount Moriah in Jerusalem is not. *Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off* (ver. 4). But the vagueness of the phrases *the land of Moriah* and *one of the mountains* (ver. 2) prevents us from fixing on any definite hill; while there is every reason to believe that *Moriah* is not the original reading, but is a gloss of late origin, and inserted in order to give the Temple at Jerusalem the credit of the patriarchal narrative. Cf. Baudissin, *Stud. zz.*

III. The third feature of Samaria is her connection with Eastern Palestine. This connection has existed from the earliest times, with the one great interruption of the Samaritan schism, down to the present day. Both Abraham and Jacob came from the East to Shechem. Israel, leaving to Ammon and Moab the regions of Eastern Palestine which are opposite Judah, herself occupied those which march with Samaria. In this latitude, one tribe, Manasseh, was settled on both sides of the river;[1] another, Ephraim, gave its name not only to the western mountains, but to a *wood* or *jungle* on the eastern side;[2] for a time in the days of the Judges, Midianites, *sons of the East*, swept annually across Jordan,

III. Connection with Eastern Palestine.

Semit. Religions-gesch. ii. 252; Dillmann on Gen. xxvii., and Henderson's *Palestine*, § 48.

[1] See Chs. xxv. and xxvi. for the Eastern Conquests of Israel.

[2] *Forest* or *Jungle of Ephraim*, in which the battle took place between David and Absalom (2 Sam. xviii. 6). Reuss (*in loco*) insists that a forest with the name Ephraim could have lain only west of Jordan. He claims that this position agrees with the course of the narrative which represents the bearer of the news to David, who was at Mahanaim, taking the direction of the Jordan Valley, which he naturally would have done had he started from the west of the river, and explains the absence of any mention of David's force recrossing the river to meet Absalom by supposing gaps in the narrative. Putting aside this arbitrary hypothesis, by which one might prove anything, I may point out that *both* messengers had to run from the scene of Absalom's defeat to David, and ask, if that was on the west of Jordan, how could it be said that only *one* of the messengers ran from it by way of the plain (ver. 23)? This disposes of Reuss' conjecture, and proves the *forest* to have been east of the river. Lucian's recension of the LXX. gives *Μααινάν* (for מחנים) instead of Ephraim as the name of the forest. But this is just the kind of correction Lucian would make to relieve a difficulty. And, indeed, why should it be thought unlikely that the name Ephraim should have crossed the river, and fastened on the eastern bank? In the course of the history of that tribe, especially in the days of the Judges, a hundred adventures were likely to occur to cause the Ephraimites, who so frequently passed over, to leave their name behind them when they went back. Or a colony may easily have settled there. And, in fact, we do read of Ephraimites settling in Gilead in such large numbers that the western Ephraimites call the Gileadites fugitives from Ephraim (Judges xii. 4).

and up to the recesses of Mount Ephraim; Gideon drove them back, and the rout extended from Esdraelon to Heshbon; it was from a rendezvous in Ephraim that Saul, though a Benjamite, marched to the relief of Jabesh Gilead.[1] As before the disruption the trans-Jordanic provinces were connected with the tribe of Joseph, so after it they fell to that tribe's successor, Northern Israel; as formerly the Midianites made yearly incursions across the river, so now the Syrians. Jeroboam, the first king, fortified Penuel after fortifying Shechem,[2] and Ramoth-Gilead was a garrison and outpost under Ahab, from which chariots drove to Jezreel and Samaria.[3] Elijah, the prophet of Samaria, was from Tishbeh in Gilead; Elisha crossed Jordan to anoint Jehu. After the exile, the impotence of the Samaritans naturally broke the connection of their territory with the land over Jordan, and Perea, as the latter was now called, formed the link between Galilee and Judæa.[4] But in modern times the old relation has reasserted itself, and the eastern table-land is again governed from Nablûs.

Its reason.

The reason of this immemorial connection is very clear. We have seen that a number of valleys lead down through Mount Ephraim upon Jordan, while the Plain of Esdraelon, with its offsets into Northern Samaria, presents a still more easy highway in the same direction. Now, to Esdraelon and those passes the Jordan, dangerous river as it is, offers an extraordinary number of fords; while farther south, where the passes into the Western Range are few and more difficult, there are in

[1] From Bezek, probably Khurbet Ibzik, thirteen miles north-east from Shechem, on the road down to Bethshan.

[2] 1 Kings xii. 25.

[3] 1 Kings xxii.; 2 Kings ix.

[4] Though Bethshan went with Decapolis.

Jordan hardly any fords.[1] The passage, therefore, from Samaria to Gilead was a comparatively easy one at many points; hence their frequent invasions of each other, and their long political union. With this contrast the separation of Judæa from the east by the great gulf of the Dead Sea.

The fords of Jordan.

In connection with the chariots above mentioned, Ahab's, Jehu's, and Naaman's, the question naturally rises, How did they cross Jordan? Till the Romans came there were no bridges in Palestine. Like the name for *port*, the name for *bridge* does not occur in the Old Testament, probably because the thing itself was quite unknown. It is unlikely that chariots were driven across the river, for the shallowest ford is three feet deep, and the bottom very muddy. Either the body of the chariot was floated over, as baggage is still floated, by inflated skins, or else such broad ferry-boats existed as Cæsar found in use on the rivers of Gaul.[2]

IV. The fourth feature of Samaria is her connection with Carmel. To Samaria Carmel holds much the same place

[1] On the Survey map not more than *five* fords are marked south of the Horn of Surtabeh, but at least *twenty-two* north of this.

[2] *Bell. Gall.* iii. 29. The depth of the fords on Jordan is very variable. Burckhardt tells of one two hours south-east from Beisan, which was three feet deep (*Syria*, 344, 345); Lynch, of one that a small donkey crossed with difficulty (*Narrative*, 224). Three Hebrew forms from the same root, *to cross*—מעבר מעברה and עברה. The first two mean both a ford (Gen. xxxii. 23, מעבר; Josh. ii. 7, and several other passages, מעברה) and a pass (1 Sam. xiii. 23; xiv. 4; Isa. x. 29). The third is used only in 2 Sam. xix. 18, and may be either a ford or more probably, as in the Authorised Version, a ferry, as it is nominative to the active verb *caused to pass over*. In the text of 2 Sam. xv. 28 and xvii. 16, the plural עברות is used, and must mean as it stands, fords; but the Hebrew margin and LXX. read ערבות, or plains. In Rabbinic Hebrew, מעברא and מעברה both mean a ferry. In Jer. li. 32, Hitz. transl. מעברה by 'bridge.'

on the west as Bashan or Gilead fills to the east. Seen from Ebal or Jezreel, they stand on either hand of Mount Ephraim, carrying the eye along the only high and sustained sky-lines within sight, and forming with Hermon the three dominant features of the view. Both of them, too, have always been better wooded than Mount Ephraim. And so, because they thus stand out in similar relation and in similar contrast to Samaria, it does not surprise us to find them, though at opposite sides of the Holy Land, frequently mentioned together. *Bashan and Carmel shake off their fruits. Israel shall feed in Bashan and Carmel. Feed thy people . . . in the forest in the midst of Carmel: let them feed in Bashan and Gilead.* Sometimes Lebanon is added: *Bashan languisheth, and Carmel, and the flower of Lebanon languisheth.*

IV. Connection with Carmel.

Though of the same rock as the Central Range, Carmel, as we have seen, is separated from the latter by a softer formation, in which the more denuded hills offer easy passages from Sharon to Esdraelon. These hills are the so-called *Shephelah of Israel*,[1] as debatable ground as the Shephelah of Judah, but lying very much more openly than the latter in the line of foreign traffic and war. Carmel was, therefore, no integral part of the body politic of Samaria. The kings, indeed, of Northern Israel held it as they held Gilead. But, in the later history, Carmel lay outside the province of Samaria—sometimes reckoned to Galilee, sometimes taken by Tyre.[2] Nor was Carmel a threshold to the land: his isolated range could not be used by Israel, as Gilead was, for the basis of foreign campaigns. Indeed we have seen how all the campaigns of Syrian

[1] Josh. xi. 16. See p. 203.

[2] Josephus, iii. *Wars*, iii. 1.

history treated Carmel only as a thing to be avoided, sweeping past on either side of him. The ridge was so well cultivated that the villages must have been many, but there was neither site nor occasion for a large town. Carmel, therefore, had no political or military history. His influences were all of another kind.

Throughout the Old Testament Carmel appears either as a symbol or as a sanctuary. His bulk, visible from so many quarters of the land, makes him the picture of all that is fact and not dream : while his headlong sweep seawards is the very token of what will surely come and not fail. *Pharaoh is but a rumour*, do they say? *As I live, saith Jehovah, surely like Tabor among the mountains, and like Carmel by the sea, shall he come!* The two hills stand at opposite ends of Esdraelon, each separate from other hills, and imposing its bulk upon the plain. But Carmel's long sweep north-westward invests him with the appearance of having *come* there. Some hills suggest immovableness, and others, with their 'long greyhound backs,' are full of motion. It is the peculiarity of Carmel to combine these effects, and to impress those who look upon him with the sense of one long stride over the plain and firm foothold upon the sea. It is not, however, only his shape that is symbolic. Sweeping seawards, Carmel is the first of Israel's hills to meet the rains, and they give him of their best. He is clothed in verdure. To-day it is mostly wild—fresh open jungle, coppices of oak and carob, with here and there a grove of great trees. But in ancient times most of the hill was cultivated. The name means The Garden, and in the rock, beneath the wild bush that now covers so much of it, grooved floors and troughs have been traced, sufficiently numerous to be the

Carmel in the Old Testament.

proof of large harvests of grape and olive. The *excellency of Carmel* was now the figure of human beauty,[1] and now the mirror of the lavish goodness of God;[2] that Carmel should languish—Carmel in the very gateway of the rains—is the prophets' most desperate figure of desolation.

Carmel and Elijah.

But it is as a sanctuary that the long hill is best remembered in history. In its separation from other hills, its position on the sea, its visibleness from all quarters of the country;[3] in its uselessness for war or traffic; in its profusion of flowers, its high platforms and groves with their glorious prospects of land and sea, Carmel must have been a place of retreat and of worship from the earliest times. It was claimed for Baal; but, even before Elijah's day, an altar had stood upon it for Jehovah. About this altar—as on a spot whose sanctity they equally felt—the rival faiths met in that contest, in which for most of us all the history of Carmel consists. The story in the Book of Kings is too vivid to be told again; but it is not without interest to know that the awful debate, whether Jehovah or Baal was supreme lord of the elements, was fought out for a full day in face of one of the most sublime prospects of earth and sea and heaven. Before him, who stands on Carmel, nature rises in a series of great stages from sea to Alp: the Mediterranean, the long coast to north and south, with its hot sands and palms; Esdraelon covered with wheat, Tabor and the lower hills of Galilee with their oaks,—then, over the barer peaks of Upper Galilee and the haze that is about them, the clear snow of Hermon, hanging like an

[1] Song vii. 5.

[2] Isaiah xxxv. 2.

[3] Carmel is visible not only from the hills of Samaria, from Jaffa, from Tyre, from Hermon, from the hills of Naphtali, but also from the hills behind Gadara, east of Jordan, and from many other points in Gilead.

only cloud in the sky. It was in face of that miniature universe that the Deity who was Character was vindicated as Lord against the deity who was not. It was over all that realm that the rain swept up at the call of the same God who exposed the injustice of the tyrant and avenged the wrongs of Naboth.

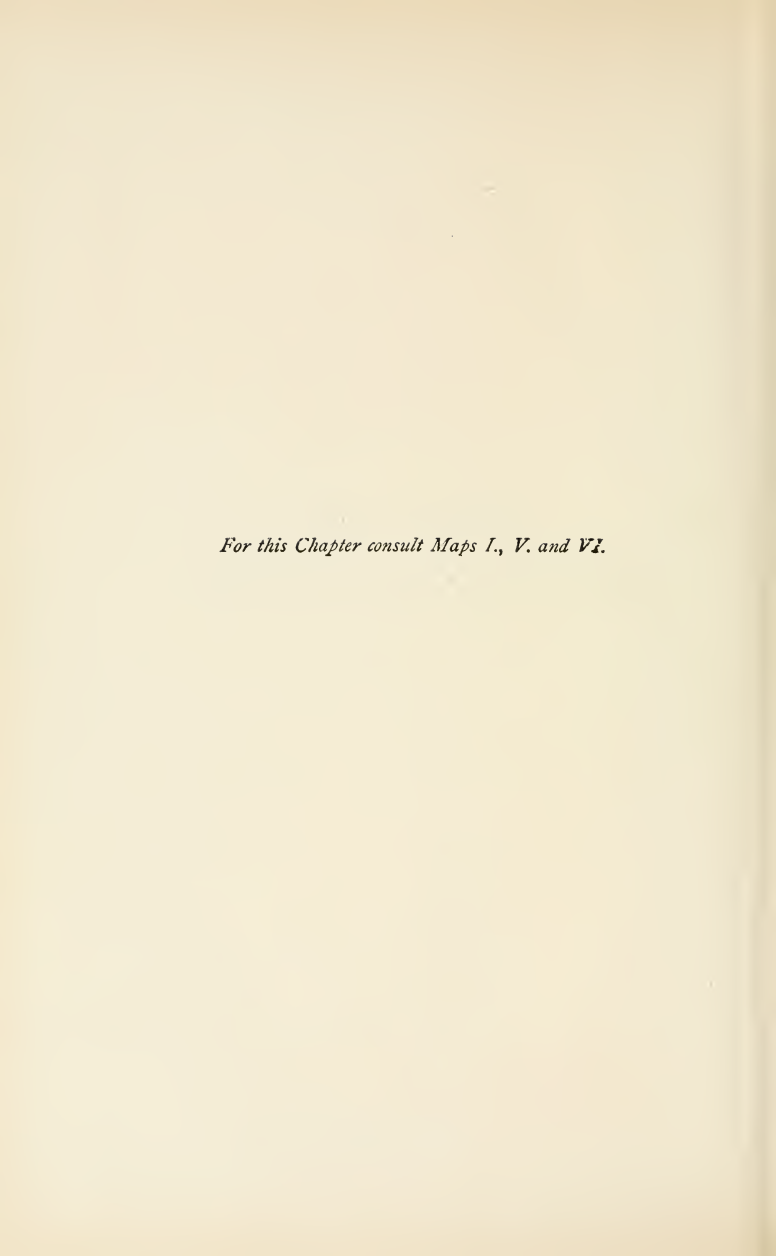
V. Strong places of Samaria.

V. The last great feature of Samaria was the fortresses, which were necessitated by the peculiar formation of the province, and which lay all around and across her. But the number of them was so great, and the part they played in her history so important,—repeating on several sites the function usually discharged in a country by one capital city,—that the description of them must be left for another chapter.



CHAPTER XVII

THE STRONG PLACES OF SAMARIA



For this Chapter consult Maps I., V. and VI.

THE STRONG PLACES OF SAMARIA

LAST chapter closed with the designation of her many fortresses as the fifth great feature of Samaria. It is these which this chapter is to describe. The large number of them was due to the openness of the land, and to the fact that, unlike Judæa, Samaria had no central position upon which her defence might be consolidated. Her fortresses lay all around and across her, but chiefly, as was natural, upon the passes which draw up to her centre. They were mostly built on the high isolated knolls, which are so frequent a feature of her scenery.

Of those strong places, the chief was that which was so long the capital and gave its name to the whole kingdom. *The head of Ephraim is Samaria.*[1]

Weakness of Shechem.

This is to dethrone Shechem, the earliest capital of the land, the place to which the government has gravitated again and again, and on which it rests to-day. But Shechem is no fortress. The natural centre of the land, as we have seen, well furnished with water, and attracting also by its sacred associations, the site is, nevertheless, incapable of defence. This was discovered by Jeroboam himself, for even in his reign we find the court at Tirzah,[2] a strong position by the head of one of the eastern passes. Tirzah was retained by the following

[1] Isaiah vii. 9.

[2] 1 Kings xiv. 17.

dynasty, but when the next usurper, Omri, had time to shape his policy, he turned westward, and chose him a virgin site in that valley which leads down from Shechem to the coast, the present Wady esh-Sha'îr or Barley-Vale. Here, in a wide basin, formed by a bend of the vale and an incoming glen, rises a round, isolated hill over three hundred feet high. It was not already a city, but was probably, as it is to-day, covered with soil and arable to the top. Omri fortified it and called it Shomĕron, Wartburg, the Watch Tower.[1] The name is obviously appropriate. Although the mountains surround and overlook it on three sides, Samaria commands a great view to the west. The broad vale is visible for eight miles, then a low range of hills, and over them the sea. It is a position out of the way of most of the kingdom, of which the centre of gravity lay upon the eastern slope; but it was wisely chosen by a dynasty whose strength was alliance with Phœnicia. The coast is but twenty-three miles away, the sea is in sight. In her palace in Samaria, Jezebel can have felt far neither from her home nor from the symbols of her ancestral faith. There flashed the path of her father's galleys, and there each night her people's god sank to his rest in the same glory betwixt sky and sea, which they were worshipping from Tyre.

The city of Samaria.

But the position has other advantages than its western

[1] שמרון from שמר to watch, with the termination so frequent in Hebrew place-names. The Aramæic is שְׁמְרַיִן, and it is from this that the Greek *Σαμάρεια* and Latin Samaria are formed. But LXX. gives also *Σεμερων* and *Σομορων*, and Josephus *Σεμαρεων* (viii. *Antt.* xii. 5): Stade, in *Z.A.T.W.*, 1885, 165-175, *Der Name der Stadt Samarien u. seine Herkunft*, disputes the statement of 1 Kings xvi. 24, that Omri first gave the place its name, and takes the original form to have been שַׁמְרוֹן.

exposure. 'Though it would now be commanded from the northern range, it must before the invention of gunpowder have been almost impregnable.'[1] The sieges of Samaria were therefore always prolonged.

Its sieges.

In Elisha's day there was the blockade by the Syrians; when, *behold, they besieged it, until an ass's head was sold for fourscore shekels, and the fourth part of a kab of Dove's dung for five.*[2] Even the Assyrians did not capture the town till after an investment of three years, 723-721. In 331, it yielded to Alexander the Great, who visited it on his way back from Egypt, in order to punish the Samaritan murderers of the Governor he had appointed over Coele-Syria.[3] Ptolemy Lagos deemed it dangerous enough to have it dismantled before he gave over Coele-Syria to Antigonus:[4] and being rebuilt, it was again destroyed fifteen years later.[5] Fortified once more, it was able in 120 to resist the flood-tide of Jewish conquest under John Hyrcanus for a year.[6] He demolished the city, but, like so many other places devastated by the Jews, it was rebuilt by Gabinius, the successor of Pompey.[7] And then as the site had suited the Phœnician alliance of Ahab, so it fell

[1] Major Conder, *Tent Work.*

[2] 2 Kings vi. 25.

[3] Andromachus, whom they burnt alive. Q. Curtius (ed. Lemaire) cf. iv. 5, 9, with iv. 8, 9. Other writers add that Alexander also settled Macedonians in the town. Euseb. *Chron.* ii. 114, Syncell. i. 496, both quoted by Schürer, *Hist.* Div. II. vol. i. 123. Euseb. also speaks of Perdiccas as having refounded the town.

[4] Diodorus Siculus, xix. 93.

[5] Demetrius Poliorcetes in his struggle against Ptolemy. Stark, *Gaza*, 361, gives the authorities.

[6] Josephus, xiii. *Antt.* x. 2, 3; i. *Wars*, ii. 7. The account of how Hyrcanus demolished Samaria is very interesting: 'He destroyed it utterly, and brought streams to drown it, for he made such excavations as might let the waters run under it; nay, he demolished the very signs that there had ever been so great a city there.' This can only mean that there was a good part of the city below the hill.

[7] Josephus, xv. *Antt.* xiv. 3; i. *Wars*, viii. 4.

in with the Roman policy of Herod, and especially with his plan of building a large port at Cæsarea, and holding the roads from the coast to the interior. Augustus gave Samaria to Herod, who fortified and embellished it in honour of his patron, and, as upon some other high places in Syria, a temple to Cæsar arose where there had been a temple to Baal.[1] Herod called it Sebaste, the Greek for Augusta, and it is this name which has survived till now with the remains of his splendid colonnades and gateways. The Herodian town probably covered and overflowed the large hill; it is said to have been not less than two miles and a half in circumference.[2] Herod settled in it a number of veterans, and used it also as a recruiting-ground for mercenary troops. The character of its population—half Greek, half Samaritan—agreed with his policy of building fortresses for himself on what was virtually pagan soil; while the thoroughly Gentile character of the soldiers whom he recruited, is proved by their subsequent desertion to the Romans, in the great Jewish revolts.[3] In spite of its re-creation as a *colonia* under Septimius Severus,[4] Sebaste dwindled to a small town,[5] though the seat of a bishop, and the centre of a large civil district. The

[1] Cf. 1 Kings xvi. 32 with i. *Wars*, xxi. 2.

[2] Josephus, xv. *Antt.* viii. 5; i. *Wars*, xxi. 3.

[3] In Josephus, xvii. *Antt.* x. 3, Herod's soldiers, and in 9, the city of Samaria, are said to have gone over to the Romans. In ii. *Wars*, iii. 4, and iv. 3, these same soldiers are called Sebastenes. The soldiers are called Σεβαστηνοί, cf. also ii. *Wars*, xii. 5, *μίαν ἴλην καλουμένην Σεβαστηνῶν.* These passages prove that the opinion is wrong which takes the *σπειρὴ Σεβαστή* of Acts xxvii. 1 for a cohort of soldiers enlisted at Sebaste. Had it been so, its name would have run *σπειρὴ καλουμένη Σεβαστηνῶν.* It is, of course, the Augustan or Imperial cohort.

[4] De Saulcy, *Numis. de la Terre Sainte*, p. 274, quotes from Ulpian (lib. i. tit. 15), and, p. 280, gives a coin of Caracalla inscribed COL. L. SEP. SEBASTE.

[5] The *Onomasticon*, *sub* Σομερων, calls it a πολίχνη, in the fourth century.

Crusaders restored the Episcopal See, with a great Gothic cathedral, whose ruins stand by the columns of Herod. But, since then, the town has sunk to a miserable village. For as long as there ruled in the land a power with no interests towards the coast and the sea, Samaria was forced to yield again to the more central Shechem the supremacy which Ahab and Herod, with their western obligations, had stolen from Shechem to give her.

To-day, amid the peaceful beauty of the scene—the secluded vale covered with corn-fields, through which the winding streams flash and glisten into the hazy distance, and the gentle hill rises without a scarp to the olives waving over its summit—it is possible to appreciate Isaiah's name for Samaria, *the crown of pride of Ephraim, the flower of his glorious beauty which is on the head of the fat valley*.[1] Only the more hard is it to realise how often such a landscape became the theatre of war and of the worst passions of tyranny and religious strife.

The city of Ahab and Herod.

Sinister fate to have belonged both to Ahab and to Herod! There by the entrance of the gate Ahab drew his sentence of death from the prophet of Jehovah; and there they washed his blood from his chariot, when they had brought him back to his burial.[2] There Jezebel slew the prophets of Jehovah and Jehu the priests of Baal.[3] There Herod married Mariamne, and when in his jealousy he had slain her for nothing, there she haunted him, till his remorse 'would frequently call for her and lament for her in a most indecent manner, and he was so far overcome of his passion that he would command his servants to call for Mariamne,

[1] Isa. xxviii. 1.

[2] 1 Kings xx.

[3] 1 Kings xviii. 13; 2 Kings x. 17 ff.

as if she were still alive and could still hear them.'[1] There, too, he strangled his two sons.[2] Like most of Herod's magnificent palaces, Sebaste was but a family shambles. It is not without fitness that a tradition, otherwise unjustified, should have localised in this place of blood the execution of John the Baptist. The church was dedicated to him, and his tomb is still pointed out in the rock beneath.

Other Western Strongholds.

On this western flank of Samaria there was no other town of the first rank. But the passes as they emerged upon Sharon must have been guarded by forts. Some hold that the present Fer'on due west of Sebaste was Pir'athon,[3] the birthplace of one of the judges. A much more likely site of importance, both in the attack and defence of the eastern border of Mount Ephraim, is the present Kakon, that lies a little way out upon the plain. Kakon commands the entrances to the roads up to Sebaste, and through by Dothan to Esdraelon. Kakon was always a frontier position. In the times of the Crusades it is described as the limit of the territory of Nablus;[4] and in March 1799 it was at Kakon that a force from Nablus, coming down by the Wady esh-Sha'îr and over the low hills by Bela' and Shuweikeh, met Turkish cavalry from Acre, and attempted to check Napoleon's march northward.[5] If it be in Northern Sharon that we must seek for the Aphek, at which the Philistines twice assembled their forces—once before invading Israel, and once before crossing to Esdraelon[6]—there is no more suitable spot than Kakon.

[1] Josephus, xv. *Antt.* vii. 7.

[2] *Id.* xvi. *Antt.* xi. 7.

[3] Judges xii. 15. But see p. 355.

[4] Röhricht, *Z.D.P.V.*, x. 246, at Kakon or Cacho, as it was then called, the Knights of St. John had a Casale.

[5] *Guerre de l'Orient: Campagnes d'Egypte et de la Syrie*, ii.

[6] 1 Sam. iv. 1; xxix. 1. But, on the various Apheks, see p. 401.

On the road from Shechem to Joppa—part of which runs along one of the natural frontiers between Samaria and the south [1]—there is no town of commanding natural strength, except el Jit, and none of the names either upon the road or near it has been satisfactorily identified with any famous name of ancient history.[2] The other great road from Sharon up the southern frontier of Samaria to Bethel, passes nothing of importance,[3] till at the junction with the Shechem Bethel road, in the extreme south-west corner of Mount Ephraim lies Jufna. Though not mentioned in the Old Testament,[4] it must at all times have played an important part in the defence or invasion of Samaria. Jufna is, without doubt, the Gophna of Josephus. It was head of a toparchy in Judæa.[5] Judas Maccabeus fell back on Gophna after his defeat by

The Shechem-Joppa road.

The Bethel, Sharon road, Gophna.

[1] The Wady Kanah, see p. 249.

[2] On the whole road and its neighbourhood cf. Robinson, *L.R.*, 133-141. El Jit is probably the Γίττων or Γιτθῶν of early Christian writers, who give it as the birthplace of the Samaritan, Simon Magus, Acts viii. 9; Just. Mart. *Apolog.* 11; Euseb. *H.E.* ii. 1, 13, etc. El Funduk is the Phondeka of the Talmud, doubtless an ancient inn, πανδοκεῖον, by the wayside (cf. Neubauer, *Géog. Talm.* 172). Fer'ata, to the east of Funduk, has been suggested both for Pir'athon (see above) and Gideon's Ophrah. 'Ophra . . . nicht zu weit von Sichem u. Tebes, wohl im sudösten des westmanassitischen Gebietes zu suchen.'—Budde, *Bü. Ri. u. Sa.* 107. Kefr Thilth, on the Wady Kanah, has been claimed as Baal Shalisha (2 Kings iv. 42); the last spur of hill which the road descends is occupied by a village (Hableh), a good site, unidentified; and a little more than a mile out on the plain is Jiljûliyeh, doubtless an ancient Gilgal, but not (as Robinson suggests) the place mentioned in Joshua xii. 23, where with the LXX. we ought rather to read Galilee.

[3] Kibbiah, which lies to the south among the hills north-east from Lydda, is probably Gibbethon, which Northern Israel sought to take from the Philistines (1 Kings xv. 27). Timnath-heres (Judges ii. 9), Timnath-serah (Joshua xix. 50; xxiv. 30), the city of Joshua has been placed at Kefr Hâris, nine miles south of Shechem.

[4] Unless it be the 'Ophni of Benjamin (Joshua xviii. 24).

[5] Josephus, iii. *Wars*, iii. 5.

Antiochus Epiphanes;[1] and it was occupied both by Vespasian in his blockade of Judæa and by Titus in his advance upon Jerusalem. Whether Paul was taken to Cæsarea by this way or by Beth-horon is uncertain.[2]

The southern frontier of Samaria was defended, when it lay so far south,[3] by Bethel, and by the city of Ephraim or Ephron,[4] if the conjecture be correct that the latter is the present strong village Et-Taiyibeh, on the road up from Jericho. Behind these outposts, the avenues northward are covered by a series of strongholds, chiefly on the tops of high knolls, like Jiljilia, probably the Gilgal of Elijah's last journey,[5] Sinjil, a Saint Giles of Crusading times,[6] and Kuriyat, one of the sites proposed for Korea,[7] which Pompey occupied on his march from Scythopolis to Jericho. Somewhere near Korea lay the Hasmonæan fortress of Alexandrium—'a stronghold fortified with the utmost magnificence, and situated on a high mountain.'[8] Alexandrium played a frequent part in the civil wars of the Jews, in the Roman invasions, and in Herod's life. Pompey occupied it. Gabinius besieged it, during which siege Mark Antony greatly distinguished

Strongholds of the Southern Frontier.

Alexandrium.

[1] Josephus, i. *Wars*, i. 5.

[2] Robinson, *Bib. Res.* iii. 77 ff.; *L.R.*, 138.

[3] See p. 250 f.

[4] 2 Sam. xiii. 23; 2 Chron. xiii. 19, Hebrew text Ephrôn; Hebrew margin Ephraim, John xi. 54; the city to which our Lord retired before the passover. It was the Aphairema of 1 Macc. xi. 34; xiii. *Antt.* iv. 9, one of three toparchies taken from Samaria and added to Judæa (see p. 254), about 145 B.C. Cf. Schür. *Hist.* Div. 1, vol. i. 246. Schlatter, *Z. Topog. u. Gesch. Pal.* 243-246, quotes Hecatäus in support of opinion that it was Alexander who ceded these districts to the Jews (?).

[5] 2 Kings ii. 1.

[6] Sinjil, a casale or manor of the Order of St. John, was presented to them by a Robert of St. Giles, Prutz, *Z.D.P.V.* iv. 166. Hence its name: one of the few which the Crusaders stamped on the land.

[7] Robinson, *Bib. Res.* iii. 83.

[8] Josephus, i. *Wars*, vi. 5.

himself.[1] Herod confined Mariamne within it,[2] and buried his two strangled sons there, 'where their uncle by their mother's side, and the greatest part of their ancestors had been deposited.'[3] Neither Korea nor Alexandrium has been identified past doubt. If Kuriyat be Korea, Alexandrium, no resemblance of which name survives anywhere, may be the Mejdel Beni Fadl, from which a Roman road went down to Phasaelis or Khurbet Bkt. el Kusr farther south.[4] But some recognise Korea in Kurawa, a name at the mouth of the Wady Far'ah on the Jordan Valley, and place Alexandrium above it on the prominent Horn of Surtabeh. Till traces of the name Alexandrium be discovered, the matter must remain uncertain.[5]

We are now round upon the eastern flank of Samaria. At no time do the passes penetrating this appear to have

[1] Josephus, xiv. *Antt.* v. 2-4.

[2] *Id.* xv. *Antt.* vii. 1.

[3] Josephus, xvi. *Antt.* xi. 7.

[4] Mejdel B. Fadl is 2146, Kh. Bkt. el Kusr 2906 feet above the sea.

[5] Not Gildemeister, *Z.D.P.V.*, 1881, p. 245 as Schürer says (*Hist.* Div. I. vol. I. 320 n.), is the author of the proposal of Kurawa and Surtabeh; but Zschokke, who made it in 1866 in *Beiträge z. Topogr. der westl. Jordan's Au* (Jerusalem, 1866). The case between the two proposed Koreas is this: (1) Josephus says 'Pompey passed by Pella and Scythopolis, he came to Korea, which is the first entrance into Judæa, when one comes through the inlands' (xiv. *Antt.* 3, 4). This suits both Kurawa and Kuriyat, for both are on what was then the frontier between Samaria and Judæa. (2) Pompey took Korea and Alexandrium on the way from Scythopolis to Jericho. His straightest line of march would be down the Ghôr, and therefore past Kurawa. But this road down the Ghôr was both dangerous and very warm: it was really not longer to come up into Mount Ephraim as far as Korea, and then go down to Jericho. (3) There is no city, village, or ruin called Kurawa; but there is a village at Kuriyat. (4) On Surtaba there are ruins, but not corresponding to Josephus' account of the size of Alexandrium. No other passage in which the latter is mentioned throws any light on its locality. The question is thus by no means so clear as Schürer feels, who decides in favour of Kurawa and Surtabeh.—Further on Alexandrium, see Strabo, xvi. ii. 41. Cf. Clermont-Ganneau, *P.E.F.Q.*, 1896, p. 79.

been protected by fortresses, where they issued on the Jordan Valley. The kings of Israel held both sides of the Jordan, and built their fortresses to the east of it, like Jeroboam's Penuel and Ahab's Ramoth; while the towns which the Herodian dynasty built in the Jordan Valley were not intended for military, but for agricultural, purposes. Herod the Great founded Phasaelis, at the mouth of the Wady Ifjim; and the 'village' which his son Archelaus built and called after himself, Archelais, probably lay close by it to the south. The district is very fertile, but had not been cultivated before it was thus colonised. It became one of the famous gardens of Syria, and its palm-groves stretched till they met those of Jericho.[1]

The eastern frontier.

Phasaelis, Archelais.

But if the eastern passes of Mount Ephraim had no fortresses by their mouths in the Jordan Valley, they had several guarding their upper ends. Thus, there were Bezek

[1] Josephus (xvi. *Antt.* v. 2; i. *Wars*, xxi. 9), Pliny (*H.N.* v. 15), and other ancient writers speak of the palms of Jericho, Phasaelis, Archelais, and Livias; cf. Ptolemy, v. 16, 7. Herod left Phasaelis to Salome (xvii. *Antt.* viii. 1, ii. *Wars*, vi. 3). She bequeathed Phasaelis and Archelais, 'where is a great plantation of palm-trees' (xviii. *Antt.* ii. 2), 'her plantation of palm-trees that was in Phasaelis' (ii. *Wars*, ix. 1), to Julia, wife of Augustus. Brocardus (twelfth century) mentions the village Phasellum in the Ghôr, and Eli Smith discovered the name Fusail attached to ruins, a great spring and the wady. The position of Phasaelis, therefore, is beyond doubt. But the name of Archelais has not been found. Josephus calls it a 'village' (xvii. *Antt.* xiii. 1), and obviously puts it near Neara—probably Νοοράθ of the *Onom.*, five miles from Jericho. The *Tabul. Peuting.* fixes it on the Roman road, twelve miles north of Jericho. If we take this figure as right (another, stating that Archelais is only twenty-four miles from Scythopolis, is wrong, since the whole distance from Jericho to Scythopolis is forty-eight, not fifteen, as Schürer puts it, Div. I. vol. ii. 41), that would bring us to a heap of ruins, nearly two miles south of Phasaelis, at the mouth of the W. Unkur edh Dhib. The *P.E.F.* map places Archelais at the mouth of the W. Far'ah, and Boettger (*Topogr. Hist. Lexicon zu den Schriften des Fl. Josephus*) at Buseiliyeh, in the same valley.

on the high-road from Shechem to Bethshan, Tirzah (if Tirzah be Teiasir, and not, as is more probable, Tulluzah) at the junction of the Bethshan and Abel-Meholah roads, and Thebez at the top of the road down the Bukei'a. Some fortress must surely have covered the top of the Wady Far'ah—Pir'athon, I would suggest, the name of which contains the same radicals as Far'ah, and is probably the same as the Pharathoni that is combined in First Maccabees with Thamnatha, another name of which there are echoes in the district.[1] At the top of Wady el Ifjim stood Taanath-Shiloh.[2]

Bezek, Tirzah, Thebez.

On the northern frontier the fortresses were of still greater importance. We have seen that from the Plain of Esdraelon there leads southward into the very heart of the province a succession of open plains, connected by easy passes. It is the widest avenue into both Samaria and Judæa,[3] and has an issue to Sharon as well as to Esdraelon. It was, therefore, sought not only by the invaders of Israel from the north, but by those from east and west[4] as well. The writer of the Book of Judith, whether his book be real history or not, amply testifies to the strategical importance of this line of entrance into Samaria. He calls its various steps the 'Anabaseis of the hill-country, for by them is the entry into Judæa,' and

Strongholds of the northern frontier.

The Book of Judith.

[1] For Pir'athon, פרעתון, see Judges xii. 13-15. Τὴν θαμναθὰ φαραθωνὶ (1 Macc. ix. 50) is evidently one place; and the θαμναθὰ, Timnah perhaps, may be still recognised in the name Tammûn, so common now at the head of Wady Far'ah.

[2] Josh. xvi. 6: identified by Van de Velde with Ta'ana.

[3] Even Judæa, as the Book of Judith emphasises.

[4] So the Midianites penetrated Mount Ephraim so far as to make the Israelites hide themselves even at Ophrah (Judges vi. 11); and the Philistines appear to have come by this way (1 Sam. iv.).

says, 'it is easy to stop the invaders as they advance (the pass being narrow) in double file at most.'[1]

Commanding the passes and plains are a series of promontories and isolated knolls; some of these were Samaria's northern fortresses. The Book of Judith mentions three, of which the farthest south was Geba, another Dothan, both still so called, and a third Bethulia, whose name cannot be recovered with any certainty—it may lurk in Meselieh or Meithalûn, or have been succeeded by Sanur.[2]

Geba, Dothan, Bethulia.

At the mouth of the pass which leads from Esdraelon lay En-gannim, the present Jenîn. This was never a fortress, for it is strong only in water, but was known as the frontier town between the later Samaria and Galilee.[3] Seven miles north of Jenîn, across the plain, on a cape of Gilboa, with a view that sweeps Esdraelon east and west, stood Jezreel. It was built by the same dynasty which built Samaria,

Jenîn.

Jezreel.

[1] . . . *τὰς ἀναβάσεις τῆς ὀρεινῆς ὅτι δι' αὐτῶν ἦν ἡ εἴσοδος εἰς τὴν 'Ιουδαίαν, καὶ ἦν εὐχερῶς διακωλῦσαι αὐτοὺς προσβαίνοντας, στενῆς τῆς προσβάσεως οὔσης ἐπ' ἄνδρας τοὺς πάντας δύο* (Book of Judith iv. 7). The extract is from the letter of the high priest charging the inhabitants of this neighbourhood to hold the passes. The last remark is exaggerated.

[2] Geba, Judith iii. 10. Dothan was a strong place in Elisha's time, 2 Kings vi. 13; in Judith it is called Dothaim, iv. 6, vii. 3, 18, viii. 3. Bethulia, the chief stronghold of Israel against Holofernes, iv. 6, vi. 10, 11, 14, vii. 1-20, etc., is placed at Meselieh by Conder, *Handbook*, p. 289; Sanur, the fortress which in 1830 stood a long siege before it yielded, has also been suggested with great probability; it is certainly the chief fortress on the line. Professor Marta (quoted in *Z.D.P.V.* xii. 117), on topographical grounds, says Bethulia was near the modern el-Barîd, N.W. of Jenîn, and believes to have found in the present Kh. Ḥaraik el Mellāh, an Arabic repetition of the name Beit-Falo, which stands for Bethulia in the Syriac translation.

[3] In Old Testament only, Joshua xix. 21, xxi. 29. Josephus calls it *Γημά*, ii. *Wars*, xii. 3, *Γιναία*, xx. *Antt.* vi. 1, iii. *Wars*, iii. 4. The two former passages describe a bitter quarrel at Ginæa between the Galilean pilgrims to Jerusalem and the Samaritans, which illustrates the feelings described in Luke ix. 52 ff.

and, like Samaria, lay convenient to their alliance with Phœnicia. Jezreel also covered the highways from the coast to Jordan and from Egypt to Damascus.[1]

As you look from Jezreel eastward, there is visible in the distance down Esdraelon another fortress, Bethshan, the position of which, and its peculiar relation to the province of Samaria and to the whole of Western Palestine, demands some description.

Bethshan.

The broad Vale of Jezreel comes gently down between Gilboa and the hills of Galilee. Three miles after it has opened round Gilboa to the south, but is still guarded by the northern hills, it suddenly drops over a bank some three hundred feet high into the valley of the Jordan. This bank, or lip, which runs north and south for nearly five miles, is cut by several streams falling eastward in narrow ravines, in which the black basalt lies bare, and the water breaks noisily over it. Near the edge of the lip, and between two of the ravines, rises a high, commanding mound that was once the citadel of Bethshan, the other quarters of which lay southward, divided by smaller streams. The position, which may be further fortified by scattering the abundant water till marshes are formed,[2] is one of great strength and immense prospect. The eye sweeps from four to ten miles of plain all round, and follows the road westward to Jezreel, covers the thickets of Jordan where the fords lie, and ranges the edge of the eastern hills from Gadara to the Jabbok. It

[1] Jezre'el is the modern Zer'în. The first unambiguous references to it as a town date from Ahab's time (1 Kings xviii. 45, 46; xxi. 1, 23, etc.). All previous instances of the name Jezreel (1 Sam. xxix. 1, 11; 2 Sam. ii. 9; iii. 2; iv. 4; 1 Kings iv. 12) may just as well be referred to the plain. See further on the name, p. 384 ff.

[2] As the Byzantine army did against the Mohammedans in 634 A.D.

is almost the farthest-seeing, farthest-seen fortress in the land, and lies in the main passage between Eastern and Western Palestine. You perceive at a glance the meaning of its history. Bethshan ought to have been to Samaria what Jericho was to Judæa—a cover to the fords of Jordan, and a key to the passes westward. But there is this difference: while Jericho lies well up to the Judæan hills, and has no strength apart from them, Bethshan is isolated, and strong and fertile enough to stand alone. Alone it has stood—less often an outpost of Western Palestine than a point of vantage against it. The one event by which this town becomes vivid in the Old Testament—the hanging of the bodies of Saul and Jonathan upon its walls—is but a symbol of the standing menace and insult it proved to Israel, from its proud position across the plain. In the earlier history, Bethshan sustained an enclave of Canaanites in the midst of Israel's territory; in the later it belonged neither to Samaria nor to Galilee, but was a free city, chief of the league of Decapolis, with an alien and provoking population.[1] In all its long history, it was Jewish for only thirty years,[2] and gladly welcomed Pompey, who made it free again.[3] Many other successful invaders, to whom it had willingly opened its gates, used it as a base of operations against the land which it ought to have defended—for example, Antiochus the

The key of western Palestine.

Generally in foreign hands.

[1] Josephus, ii. *Wars*, xviii. 3.

[2] Judas Maccabeus had found it friendly in 164, but probably from fear or policy (2 Macc. xii. 29-31) it yielded to John Hyrcanus in 107 (?) (Josephus xiii. *Antt.* x. 3), and remained under Jewish rule till Pompey's arrival in 64 B.C

[3] Jos. xiv. *Antt.* iii. 4. For its coins under the Empire, see De Saulcy, *Numis. de la Terre Sainte*, 287-290: Plate xiv. 8-13. It was rebuilt by Gabinius.

Great[1] and Vespasian.[2] On the first occasion on which Bethshan was seriously employed for the defence of Western Palestine, the stupidity of her garrison rendered her natural strength of no avail. In 634 A.D. the Byzantine army having suffered a great defeat upon the Yarmuk,[3] fell back across Jordan, fortified the bank on which Bethshan stands, and scattered the water into marshes. The Moslem found these impassable, and sat down in blockade for some months, hoping that summer would exhaust the streams. But before summer came the Byzantines rashly attacked them on their own ground, and suffered a second and decisive defeat. Beisan surrendered soon after. The battle was called the battle of Fahl, the Arabic name for Pella, which lies on the opposite side of Jordan; but in the history of Islam the day lives as the Day of Beisan. It settled the fate of Western Palestine.[4]

The Day of Beisan.

The only other serious defence of Bethshan was also against Moslem attack, and was likewise rendered futile by the stupidity of the defenders. The Crusaders seem never to have paid to the town that attention which its position invited, and the presence across Jordan of the Moslem power ought to have extorted from them. Their attempts at fortification on this vulnerable portion of their frontier they concentrated on the castle of Belvoir, high above Bethshan and the channel through which the Moslems were certain to sweep. The

Capture by Saladin, 1187.

[1] 198 B.C., Polybius v. 70, who says that its cession to Antiochus was *καθ' ὁμολογίαν*.

[2] iii. *Wars*, ix. 7. Vespasian found it a good centre from which to operate, both against Galilee and Judæa.

[3] Others hold that this battle was fought at Yarmuth (Josh. x. 23).

[4] Muir, *Annals of the Early Caliphate*. *The Caliphate: its Rise*, etc., 104, 105.

result proved their error. Bethshan, unwalled and weakly garrisoned, gallantly repulsed the first onset of Saladin, but within a year he had returned and destroyed her, with Jezreel and another fortress in the neighbourhood called Afarbala or Fourbelet.[1] Belvoir held out for eighteen months more—as, indeed, any well-manned fortress on that height could not help doing—but to what purpose? The Christian banner at Belvoir waved a mere signal, remote, ineffectual, above the flood of Mohammedanism that speedily covered the whole land. The mistake was to have neglected Bethshan. When the Crusaders left Bethshan to its fate, they sealed their own.

Other history of Beisan.

These few campaigns will have shown us the strategical importance of this remarkable town. But, from its position on the high-road between Damascus and Egypt, Bethshan must have seen many other sights and persons of great name in history. It can scarcely have failed to fall in the way of Thothmes III.,[2] but the earliest note of it in Egyptian literature occurs in the fourteenth century B.C., in the travels of the Mohar, who passed through it in his chariot: 'Represent to me Baitasha-al as well as Keriathaal: the fords of the Jordan—how does one cross them?—let me know the passage to enter Mageddo.'[3] The name does not seem to occur in the lists of Assyrian and Babylonian conquests, but Holofernes

[1] Boha-ed-Dîn, *Life of Saladin*, c. 24 (ed. Schultens, pp. 53, 54; cf. William of Tyre, xxii. 26). Afarbala, عفربالا, is doubtless the Crusaders' Fourbelet, or Forbelet, a castle belonging to the Hospitallers, described as not far from Jordan, and south of Beisan. Rey suggests the Kala'at Maleh (*op. cit.* 427).

[2] In the list of places conquered by him in Palestine is a Bathshal; but neither Mr. Tomkins nor Professor Sayce identifies this with Bethshan. II. *Rec. of Past*, v. 52. Müller (*op. cit.* p. 193) denies that Bet-sa-el = Bethshan.

[3] I. *Rec. of Past*, ii. 112; cf. II. *Id.* v. 52.

rested here, and if both he as well as Pompey and Saladin —all three while advancing from Damascus to invade Western Palestine — occupied Bethshan, then Tiglath Pileser and Sargon, with the same line of march, very probably did so too. An older Cleopatra visited Bethshan when she made her treaty with Alexander Janneus ;[1] and Vespasian caused his legions to winter in its warmth.[2] Josephus says that in his time Bethshan—then called Scythopolis—was the largest city of the Decapolis.[3] Its territory was wide and rich.[4] The ruins remaining attest a high degree of wealth and culture. Several temples have been traced, and there is a large amphitheatre, of which so much is still preserved that it requires little effort to summon up about you, as you stand in the arena, the throng and passion of the city in its Greek days. Twelve black basalt rows of benches for the citizens—semicircles of nearly two hundred feet in diameter—rise eastward just so high as to let the actors upon the arena see, over the mass of faces, the line of the Gilead hills on the other side of Jordan.[5] No Christian can stand among these ruins—the best preserved on the west of the Jordan——without remembering that during the persecutions of Decius and Diocletian the amphitheatres of Syria were used for the slaughter of the confessors of Christ. The citadel frowned over all from the north.

[1] Josephus, xiii. *Antt.* xiii. 2.

[2] iv. *Wars*, ii. 1. Bethshan lies 320 feet below the sea.

[3] iii. *Wars*, ix. 7.

[4] Polybius v. 70 ; Josephus, *Life*, 9. It bordered with Gadara.

[5] There are fourteen entrances—for spectators, for actors, for wild beasts—and behind these, beneath the seats, the passages and exits are still well preserved. Half way up the benches are certain recesses, which are said to have contained brass sounding tubes (cf. Irby and Mangles' *Travels*, 301, 302 ; Robinson, *L.R.* 318).

In Christian times Bethshan was still a noble city,[1] an episcopal see,[2] full of monks, and the birthplace of some Christian literature.[3] The fertile country around was well cultivated in ancient times; like Jericho, the town was surrounded by palm groves. The linen of Scythopolis was famed all over the world.[4] Moslem war and waste swept all this away. The Crusaders, as we have seen, did little to revive the town, and, since Saladin finally dismantled it, Beisan has been little more than the squalid village which now gathers to the south of the unoccupied citadel. There are few sites which promise richer spoil beneath their rubbish to the first happy explorer with permission to excavate. But meantime, under shadow of the high mound, where the streams rattle down in the beds they have worn deep for thousands of years, and Jordan lies in front, and Gilead rises over Jordan, it is possible to dream very vivid dreams of a past in which Saul and Judas Maccabeus, Pompey, Cleopatra and Vespasian, the Byzantines and first Moslem invaders, the Crusaders and Saladin, have all played a part.

With regard to the names of this town, it is well known that it had two, and not so well known that, for a period, it had also a third. In the Old Testament it is Bethsha'an or Bethshan.[5] In the Septuagint, the Second Maccabees,

[1] Euseb. *Onom.* Bethsan, ἐπίσημος.

[2] For a list of its bishops (the bishop of the time was present at Nice) see Reland, *Palæst.*, under Scythopolis.

[3] Basilides and Cyril.

[4] On the palms, Sozomen, *H.E.* viii. 13 (in 1891 there was one young palm thirty feet high); on the linen, *Totius Orbis Descriptio* (anonymous, fourth century), in *Geogr. Græci min.*, ed. Müller, ii.; cf. Marquardt, *Das Privatleben der Römer*, ii. 466.

[5] בית שׁאן, Josh. xvii. 11, 16; Judges i. 27; 1 Kings iv. 12; 1 Chron. vii. 29—from which verse we see that Bethshaan was a district as well as a town. But בית שׁן, 1 Sam. xxxi. 10, 12; 2 Sam. xxi. 12.

Josephus, and all Greek and Latin literature, it is called Scythopolis.[1] But it claimed also, as so many other towns did, to have been Nysa, where the infant Bacchus was nursed by the nymphs; and this name appears both on the town's coins and in classical writers.[2] Both Bethshan and Scythopolis were extant till the Crusades,[3] since which an Arabic contraction of Bethshan, Beisân, has prevailed. Beth-sha'an, in the longer of the two forms in which it is given in Hebrew, means the House of Security, or Tranquillity, or even, in a bad sense, Self-confidence; any of which would be appropriate to the natural strength and fertility of so self-contained a site, while the last might well have been bestowed by the Hebrews upon a city which so long defied them. This, however, is uncertain; and it is possible that we have here simply the name of some deity, as in Beth-Dagon and Beth-Peor. The origin of the name Scythopolis, or Scytopolis, is as obscure. The most obvious derivation of course is that explicitly made in one or two occurrences of the name as Σκυθῶν πόλις, or, City of the Scythians, who are said by Herodotus to have invaded Palestine in the reign of Psammetichus.[4] Bethshan lies on the line of such an invasion. It has also been suggested that Scythopolis is

The names Bethshan and Scythopolis.

[1] Σκυθῶν πόλις, LXX., Judges i. 27; Judith iii. 10; 2 Macc. xii. 29; Polybius v. 70. But Σκυθόπολις, Josephus xii. *Antt.* viii. 5; xiii. *id.* vi. 1; Pliny, *H.N.* v. 16 (18), etc. But Scytopolis, *Totius Orbis Descriptio* in *Geogr. Græ. min.*, ed. Müller, ii.

[2] Pliny, *H.N.* v. 16 (18): *Scythopolim antea Nysam.* So also Stephen Byzantinus. For the coins, De Saulcy, *Pl.* xiv. 8-13, No. 10, ΝΥΣΑ·ΙΕΡΑ; No. 11, ΝΥΣ·ΣΚΥΘΟ·ΙΕΡΑ. Others have a figure supposed to be the nymph suckling Bacchus. The coins date from Nero to Gordian.

[3] Fetellus (*circa* 1130) gives both.

[4] Herod. i. 103, 105. Pliny, *H.N.* v. 16 (18), says Bacchus himself settled the Scythians there! It is useless to quote on this point Syncellus, a historian of the eighth century.

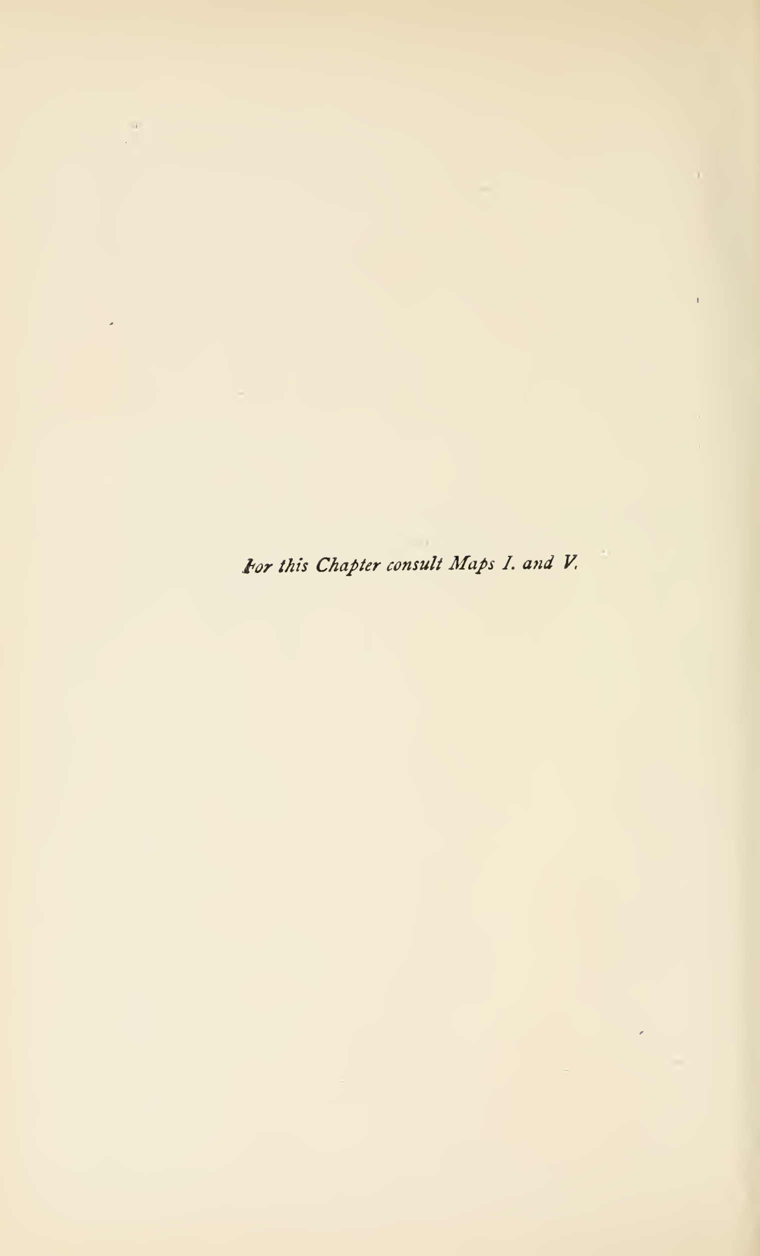
Succothopolis [1]—the name Succoth occurring in the neighbourhood—but Robinson rightly objects to the probability of such a hybrid, the like of which indeed does not elsewhere occur. It may, however, easily have happened that the Greek colonists, hearing some Semitic name in the district, should have wrongly supposed it to be the same as 'Scythian.' This Semitic name may have been Succoth; or it is just possible that it was that word of similar radicals to Succoth, which is used in the Old Testament as a synonym for the second syllable of Beth-sha'an, if Beth-sha'an be really the *House of Security*.[2]

[1] By Reland, with whom Gesenius agrees: *Thesaurus*, sub voce בית שׁאן.

[2] סכת, to be *still* or *silent*, is related to שׁקט, sh'k't, which is synonymous with שׁאן. It is used like שׁאן of land as well as men. See Judges iii. 11 and parallel passages. The two words occur together in Jer. xxx. 10 and xlvi. 27: ושקט ושאן.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE QUESTION OF SYCHAR



For this Chapter consult Maps I. and V.

THE QUESTION OF SYCHAR

THE identification of Sychar would be a small matter, if it were not that its difficulty, as well as that of the whole topography of the Fourth Chapter of John, has been made the ground, by some for doubting, by others for denying, that the author of the Gospel was personally acquainted with the geography of Palestine. A well-known writer has said bluntly that there was no such place as Sychar, and that the Gospel commits a blunder.[1] And recently another writer[2] has stated a number of difficulties in the way of accepting the Fourth of John as the account of an eye-witness. The time has come for a revision of the whole argument. I hope, by pointing out some material things that have hitherto been overlooked, to meet the difficulties, and if not to place the identification of Sychar beyond doubt, at least to adduce sufficient evidence in its support to prove the charge of mistake unfounded and even absurd.

The objections made to the topography of Fourth John are three:—1. Sychar is not known to us as *a city of Samaria.* 2. Even if Sychar be proved to be either Shechem or the present El 'Askar, no woman seeking water would have come from it to Jacob's Well. 3. Exposi-

[1] *Supernatural Religion*, ii. 427.
[2] Mr. Cross, *Critical Review* for July 1892.

tions, based on the accuracy of the narrative, involve an error concerning the direction of the main road through Samaria to Galilee.

1. *Supernatural Religion* holds it evident that there was no such place as Sychar, and that 'a very significant mistake' has been committed by the author of John's Gospel—significant, that is, of his ignorance of Palestine.

Now, to begin with, let us remember that the writer of the Fourth Gospel is admitted to have been a man well acquainted with the Old Testament, and that in the Old Testament the position of the locality in question, *the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph*, is more than once carefully fixed. In Genesis xxxiii. 19 it is described as *in face of*, or *to the east of*, *the city of Shechem*;[1] and in Joshua xxiv. 32 as *in Shechem*. It is inconceivable that, with these passages before him, any student of the Old Testament would, in mere error, have substituted Sychar for Sychem—Συχάρ for Συχέμ. But the point goes further. Had the writer of the Gospel possessed only that knowledge of the locality which the Old Testament gave him, it is most probable that like Stephen[2] he would have used the name Συχέμ. That he introduces another name, is surely a sign that he employed another source of information. All now agree that Sychar is not a copyist's error.[3] If, then, the author himself wrote it, he did so in spite of two well-known passages in the Old Testament—with which his familiarity is evident—and, therefore, it may

[1] That is, if we adopt the rendering which takes *Shalem* adverbially, *in peace*.

[2] Acts vii. 16.

[3] This was Jerome's way out of the difficulty.

safely be presumed, because of his acquaintance with Sychar as a name in the topography of Samaria.

In that topography Sychar can have stood—either as a second name for Shechem, or as the name of another place in the neighbourhood of Shechem.

For the first of these alternatives a good deal has been said, but all in the way of hypothesis. It is within the bounds of possibility, that, by their favourite habit of playing upon names, the Jews may have called Shechem Sheqer, *false*, or Shikor, *drunken*.[1] But we have absolutely no proof of their ever having done so, and it is to be noted that the passage in Isaiah xxviii., which is quoted in support of the second, and etymologically the only possible, derivation for Sychar, does not describe Shechem at all, but the city of Samaria, or Sebaste, six miles away. Trench's idea, that John, in his habit of symbolising, was himself the author of the nickname, is too far-fetched.[2]

Evidence for Sychar as a separate town.

We turn, therefore, to the second possibility, that Sychar was the name of a place other than Shechem, but, like Shechem, in the neighbourhood of *the parcel of ground which Jacob bought*. For this the first evidence we get is in the beginning of the fourth century, when two visitors to the land, Eusebius and the Bordeaux Pilgrim (the latter about A.D. 333), both mention a Sychar, distinct from Shechem,—lying, says the former, before Neapolis, the present Nablûs,[3] and the latter adds that it was a Roman mile

Early Christian.

[1] שֶׁקֶר, *falsehood*, was applied to idols (Hab. ii. 18). In Isaiah xxviii. reference is made to drunkenness, שִׁכּוֹר, as the notorious sin of Samaria.

[2] *Studies in the Gospels*, 86.

[3] From which Eusebius also distinguishes Shechem, describing the latter as in the suburbs of Neapolis, and holding Joseph's tomb. (Euseb., *Onomasticon.*)

from Shechem. Jerome, it is true, asserts that Shechem and Sychar are the same; but he says so without evidence except such as all now agree to be unfounded,[1] and his negative assertion cannot stand against the other two, who say that they saw this Sychar distinct from Shechem—the less so, that in translating Eusebius Jerome adopts his Sychar without question. The next traces of a separate Sychar are found in mediæval writers. The Abbot Daniel

Mediæval.

(1106-1107) speaks of 'the hamlet of Jacob called Sichar. Jacob's well is there. Near this place, at half a verst away, is the town of Samaria . . . at present called Neapolis.' Fetellus (1130) says: 'A mile from Sichem is the town of Sychar, in it is the fountain of Jacob, which however is a well.' John of Wurzburg (1160-1170) says: 'Sichem is to-day called Neapolis. Sichar is east of Sichem, near to the field which Jacob gave to his son, wherein is the well of Jacob, at which place a church is now being built.'[2] Again in the Samaritan Chronicle, the latest possible date of which is the fourteenth century, there occurs the name of a town 'apparently near Shechem, which is spelt Ischar,' with initial Aleph, which is merely a vulgar pronunciation of Sychar.[3] Quaresmius, who wrote about 1630,[4] reports that Brocardus (1283) saw 'a certain large city deserted and in ruins, believed to have been that ancient Sichem, to the left' or north 'of Jacob's well:' 'the natives told me the

[1] Viz., the confusion by some copyist of Sychar with Sychem.

[2] I quote Daniel (who very curiously confounds Neapolis with Sebaste), Fetellus, and John of Wurzburg, from the translations of the Palestine Pilgrims' Text Society.

[3] Conder, *Tent Work*, 41.

[4] '*Elucidatio Terræ Sanctæ*,' Lib. vii., Peregr. i. Cap. ix. That it is the report of Brocardus which Quaresmius gives, and not his own, is clear from the next paragraph, where he says: 'Fateor me non vidisse nisi Neapolem, nec vetus Sychar,' etc.

place is now called Istar by them.' Then the traveller Berggren found the name 'Askar or 'Asgar, with initial 'Ain, given both to a spring 'Ain el 'Askar, which he identifies with Jacob's well, and—which is much more important for our question—to the whole plain below, the Sahil el 'Askar.[1] And, finally, the name still attaches to a few ruins and hovels at the foot of Mount Ebal, about one mile and three-quarters east north-east from Nablûs and little over half a mile north from Jacob's well.[2] The question is, Can 'Askar be derived from Sychar through Ischar? Robinson says no: 'the fact that 'Askar begins with the letter 'Ain excludes all idea of affinity with the name Sychar.'[3] But Robinson is wrong. Though the tendency is the other way, there are cases known in which 'Ain has displaced Aleph. Conder says that the Samaritans themselves in translating their chronicle into Arabic call Ischar 'Askar.[4] And it has hitherto been overlooked that among the place-names of Palestine we have a strictly analogous case. Ascalon in Hebrew begins with an Aleph, but in Arabic this has changed to an initial 'Ain. The case, therefore, for 'Askar, so far from being barred by the rules of the language, comes through this last test in all its strength. And its strength, in short, is this. That in the fourth century two authorities independently describe a Sychar distinct from Shechem; that in the twelfth century at least three travellers, and in the thirteenth at least one, do the same, the latter also quoting a corrupt but still possible variation

Modern.

The names Sychar and 'Askar.

Conclusion.

[1] *Reise*, ii. 267.

[2] First described by Canon Williams and since with greatest detail by Major Conder, *Tent Work*, 40-42.

[3] *Later Researches*, 133.

[4] *Tent Work*, 41.

of the name; that in the fourteenth the Samaritan Chronicle mentions another form of the name; and that modern travellers find a third possible variation of it not only applied to a village suiting the site described by the authorities in the fourth century, but important enough to cover all the plain about the village. All this is perhaps not conclusive, but at least very strong, proof for the identification of 'Askar with Sychar. Certainly there is enough of it to expose the dictum of *Supernatural Religion*, that it is 'evident' there was no such place as Sychar, and that the writer of the Gospel made 'a mistake.' The 'evidence,' so far as it goes, is all the other way.

Of course it may be said that the name Sychar was fastened on the district by the Christian pilgrims and sacred-site jobbers of the fourth century—who were forced to find a place for it since it occurred in the Gospel. But to this the answer is obvious. For many centuries after the fourth it was taken for granted that Jerome was right, and that Shechem and Sychar were the same place.[1] That all this time, in spite of ecclesiastical tradition, the name Sychar should have continued to exist in the neighbourhood, and solely among the natives, is a strong proof of its originality—of its having been from the first a native and not an artificial name.

[1] By, among others, Arculf, 700; Saewulf, apparently, 1102; Theoderich, 1172; Sir J. Maundeville, 1322; Tuchem of Nurnberg, 1480. A curious opinion is offered by the Graf zu Solms (1483) that 'on the right hand of this well' of Jacob, that is, to the south of it, 'ist ein alter grosser Fleck aber öde, dass ich meyne die alte Statt Sichem seyn gewesen, dann gross alt Gebäw da ist. Und liget von dem abgenanten Brunnen Jacob zwen steinwürff weit, gar an einer lustigen Stett, allein dass es Wasser mangelt.' But from Neapolis the well was two bow-shots off, so that 'some say Napolis is Thebes.'

2. This still leaves us with the second difficulty. Granted that Sychar is either Shechem, the present Nablûs, or 'Askar, is it likely that any woman from them, seeking water, should have come past streams in their immediate neighbourhood to the more distant, the deep and scanty well of Jacob? There is a copious fountain in 'Askar: and a stream, capable of turning a mill, flows down the valley only 'a few rods'[1] from Jacob's well. This the woman, if coming from 'Askar, must have crossed, while, if coming from Shechem, she must have passed near it and many other sources of water. Jacob's well itself is over one hundred feet deep,[2] and is often dry.

2. Jacob's Well.

Now in answer to this, it may be justly said that the real difficulty is not why the woman should have come to the well, but why the well should be there at all. That any one should have dug so deep a well in the immediate neighbourhood of so many streams is most perplexing, unless indeed in those far away summers the surface streams ran dry, and the well was dug so deep that it might catch their fainting waters below the surface.[3] Be that as it may, the well is there—a fact testifying past all doubt the possibility of the fact of the woman's use of it. Specially dug for man's use by man, how impressively among the natural streams around does it explain the intensity of the woman's words: *Our father Jacob gave us the well.* Of course—it was *given*, not found. The signs of labour and expense stand out upon it all the more patheti-

[1] Robinson.

[2] 'Thirty-five yards,' Maundrell; 'one hundred and five feet,' Holmes.

[3] Robinson indeed suggests that an earthquake may have changed the whole disposition of the waters in the Vale of Shechem since the time of the narrative. Possible, for on that high pass very little could tilt the watershed to the west, but in an argument like this we do not dare to count on it.

cally for the freedom of the waters that come rattling down the vale; and must, one feels, have had their share in increasing the fondness of that tradition which, possibly, was the attraction that drew Jacob's fanatic children to its scantier supplies.[1]

It is impossible to say whether the well is now dry, for many feet of it are choked with stones. Robinson says there is a spring in it,[2] Conder that it fills by infiltration. If either of these be correct, then we can understand the double titles given to it in the narrative, both of which our version renders by *well*. It is *Jacob's fountain*, πήγη (v. 5); *but the pit*, τὸ φρέαρ, *is deep* (v. 11); and *Jacob gave us the pit* (v. 12). It is by little touches like these, and by the agreement of the rest of the topography—Mount Gerizim, and the road from Judæa to Galilee—(as well as by the unbroken traditions of three religions), that we feel sure that this is the Jacob's well intended by the writer, and that he had seen the place.

Thus, then, the present topography, so far from contradicting, justifies the narrative. The author knew the place about which he was writing.

3. The roads by Sychar.

3. By Jacob's well the great north road through Samaria forks, and the well lies in the fork. One branch turns westward up the vale past Shechem, and so on round the west of Ebal to Sebaste, and Jenîn. The other holds north across the mouth of the vale and past 'Askar. Now exception has been taken[3] to Lightfoot's and Stanley's speaking of this second road as the main road to

[1] Porter mentions a favourite well outside Damascus which drew the inhabitants a mile away from their own abundant waters.

[2] *Lat. Res.* 108.

[3] By Mr. Cross, *Critical Review*, July 1892

Galilee. He says the latter has always gone by Shechem and Sebaste, and that the road which holds across the mouth of the vale turns north-east into the Jordan Valley at Bethshan, and leads not to Upper Galilee, where our Lord was going, but to Tiberias and the Lake. He is correct when he says the Shechem road is the ordinary road, but wrong in saying there is not a road across the mouth of the vale and so on to Jenîn. As he admits, Robinson was told of such a road; and I have to report that in 1891, being anxious to avoid the road by Sebaste, which I had already traversed, I was informed by my muleteers that I could reach Jenîn by following the Bethshan road, and, when it struck east, keeping due north. Moreover, this is a much more natural direction for the trunk road to the north to follow than round by Shechem and Sebaste. For if any one will take the Survey Map, he will see this direction to be on the line of that series of plains which come right down from Esdraelon to opposite the Vale of Shechem;[1] while the road round by Sebaste has to climb a great barrier of hills. Besides, such a road would be preferred by our Lord, avoiding as it did both Shechem and Sebaste, two large towns, one Greek, the other Samaritan, close to which, if He turned up the valley, He must needs have passed.

So that Lightfoot and Stanley are probably correct; but the point is a small one, and does not affect the narrative in John. Upon the data given there, our Lord and His disciples, after their rest at Jacob's well, may have intended to take any one of the three roads; and that whether the city to which the disciples went to buy bread was Shechem or was 'Askar.

[1] See p. 327 f.





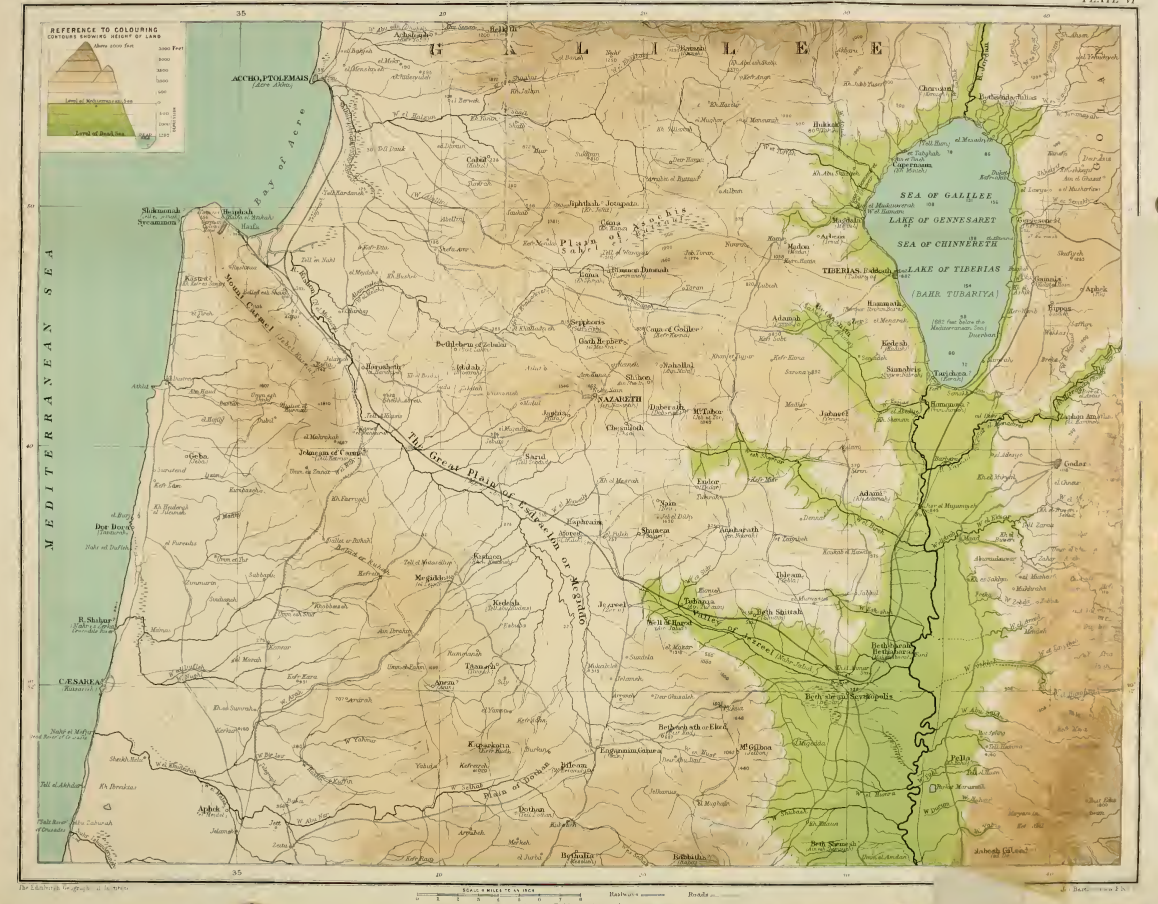
CHAPTER XIX

ESDRAELON

For this Chapter consult Maps I., III. and VI.



ESDRAELON AND LOWER GALILEE.



The Edinburgh Geographical Institute

London, Hodder and Stoughton

ESDRAELON

IN our survey of Samaria we have already found ourselves drawn out upon the great Plain of Esdraelon. The plain has come up to meet us among the Samarian hills. Carmel and Gilboa encompass it; half a dozen Samarian strongholds face each other across its southern bays. Nature has manifestly set Esdraelon in the arms of Samaria. Accordingly, in the Old Testament times they shared, for the most part, the same history; in tribal days, though Esdraelon was assigned to Zebulun and Issachar, Manasseh, the keeper of the hills to the south, claimed towns upon it;[1] in the days of the kingdom, the chariots of the Samarian kings,[2] the footsteps of the Samarian prophets, traversed Esdraelon from Carmel to Jordan.[3] But after the Exile the Samaritan [2] Schism—confounder of so many natural arrangements—divorced the plain from the hills which embrace it, and Esdraelon was counted not to the province of Samaria, but to that of Galilee, the southern frontier of which was coincident with its own southern edge.[4] More interesting, however, than the connection of either north or south with Esdraelon, is the separation which this great plain effects between them, the break it causes in the central range of

Esdraelon and Samaria.

[1] Josh. xvii. 11 ff.; xix. 10-23.
[2] See p. 330.
[3] 1 Kings xviii. 44-46; 2 Kings iv. 9.
[4] Josephus, ii. *B.J.* iii. 4.

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ESDRAELON

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[2] See p. 330.

[3] 1 Kings xviii. 44-46; 2 Kings iv. 9.

[4] Josephus, ii. *B.J.* iii. 4.

Palestine, the clear passage it affords from the coast to the Jordan. This has given Esdraelon a history of its own.

Esdraelon is usually regarded as one plain under one name from sea to Jordan. In reality, however, it is not one, but several plains, more or less divided by the remains of ridges, which once upon a time sustained across it the continuity of 'the backbone of Palestine.' Thus, nine miles from the sea, near Tell el Kasis,[1] the traditional site of the slaughter of the priests of Baal, a promontory of the Galilean hills shoots south to within a hundred yards of Carmel, leaving only that space for the Kishon to break through. Eight or nine miles farther east, at Lejjun, probably the ancient Megiddo, low ridges run out from both north and south, as if they had once met, and again leave Kishon but a narrow pass. And once more, between Jezreel and a spot west of Shunem, about twenty-four miles from the coast, there is a sudden fall of level eastwards, which visibly separates Esdraelon proper from the narrower valley sloping towards Jordan and is perhaps evidence of a former connection between Gilboa and Moreh. It should be added, that to north and south of the plain the geological formation is the same.

The three sections of the plain.

If we overlook the rising ground at Lejjun, which is not very prominent, we thus get, upon this great opening across Palestine, three divisions—to the west the Maritime Plain of Acre, bounded by the low hills near Tell el Kasis; in the centre a large inland plain; and upon the east, running down from it from Jordan, the long valley between Gilboa and Moreh. Of these the Central Plain lies as much athwart, as on a

Plain of Acre, Inland Plain, Descent to Jordan.

[1] *i.e.* the Mound of the Priest.

line with, the other two, spreading to north and south with a breadth equal to its length. In shape the Central Plain is a triangle. The southern side or base is twenty miles from Tell el Kasis by the foot of Carmel and the lower Samarian hills south to Jenîn. The other two sides are equal, fifteen miles each; the northern being the base of the Nazareth hills from Tell el Kasis to the angle between them and Tabor, the eastern a line from Tabor to Jenîn. This side is not so bounded by hills as the other two, but has three breaks across it eastward—one between Tabor and Moreh, a mere bay of the plain, with a narrow wady down to the Jordan; one between Moreh and Gilboa, the long valley aforesaid running to the Jordan at Bethshan; and one between Gilboa and the hills about Jenîn, also a bay of the plain, but without issue to Jordan. The general level of the Central Plain is 200 feet above the sea-line, but from this the valley Jordanwards sinks gently in twelve miles to 400 feet below the sea, at Bethshan, where it drops over a high bank on to the Jordan Plain.

This disposition of the land, with all that it has meant in history, is best seen from Jezreel.

View from Jezreel.

As you stand upon that last headland of Gilboa, 200 feet above the plain, your eye sweeps from the foot of Tabor to Jenîn, from Tell el Kasis to Bethshan. The great triangle is spread before you. Along the north of it the steep brown wall of the Galilean hills, about 1000 feet high, runs almost due west, till it breaks out and down to the feet of Carmel, in forest slopes just high enough to hide the Plain of Acre and the sea. But over and past these slopes Carmel's steady ridge, deepening in blue the while, carries the eye out to its dark promontory above the Mediterranean. From this end of Carmel the

lower Samarian hills,[1] green with bush and dotted by white villages, run south-east to the main Samarian range, and on their edge, due south, seven miles across the bay, Jenîn stands out with its minarets and palms, and the glen breaking up behind it to Dothan. The corresponding bay on the north between Moreh and Tabor, and Tabor itself, are hidden. But all the rest of the plain is before you—a great expanse of loam, red and black,[2] which in a more peaceful land would be one sea of waving wheat with island villages; but here is what its modern name implies,[3] a free, wild prairie, upon which but one or two hamlets have ventured forth from the cover of the hills and a timid and tardy cultivation is only now seeking to overtake the waste of coarse grass and the thistly herbs that camels love. There is no water visible. The Kishon itself flows in a muddy trench, unseen five yards away. But here and there a clump of trees shows where a deep well is worked to keep a little orchard green through summer; dark patches of reeds betray the beds of winter swamps; and the roads have no limit to their breadth, but sprawl, as if at most seasons one caravan could not follow for mud on the path of another. But these details sink in a great sense of space, and of a level made almost absolute by the rise of hills on every side of it. It is a vast inland basin, and from it there breaks just at your feet, between Jezreel and Shunem, the valley Jordanwards,—breaks as visibly as river from lake, with a slope,

[1] Which we have already identified as the Shephelah of Israel. See p. 338

[2] 'Loose soil, mostly volcanic, which is very tiring to horses, and therefore unfitted for cavalry evolutions, and in winter boggy.'—*P.E.F. Mem.* ii. 36.

[3] Merj ibn Amir. 'The meadow of the son of Amir,' but meadow of a wild, rough kind.

and almost the look of a current upon it. Away down this, between Gilboa and Moreh, Bethshan shines like a white island in the mouth of an estuary, and, across the unseen depth of Jordan, rises the steep flat range of Gilead —a counterpart at this end of the view to the long ridge of Carmel at the other.[1]

From Jezreel you can appreciate everything in the literature and in the history of Esdraelon.

I. The Blessing of Issachar.

I. To begin with, you can enjoy that happiest sketch of a landscape and its history that was ever drawn in half a dozen lines, *Issachar*[1]—to which the most of Esdraelon fell—

> *Issachar is a large-limbed ass,*
> *Stretching himself between the sheepfolds :*
> *For he saw a resting-place that it was good,*
> *And the land that it was pleasant.*[2]

Such exactly is Esdraelon—a land relaxed and sprawling up among the hills to north, south and east, as you will see a loosened ass roll and stretch his limbs any day in the sunshine in a Syrian village yard. To the highlander looking down upon it, Esdraelon is room to stretch in and lie happy. Yet the figure of the ass goes further—the room must be paid for—

> *So he bowed his shoulder to bear*
> *And became a servant under task-work.*

The inheritors of this plain never enjoyed the highland independence of Manasseh or Naphtali. Open to east

[1] This 'antiphon' of Gilead and Carmel, in the view from Jezreel, further illustrates the remark made on p. 338.

[2] Gen. xlix. 14.

and west, pleasantest stage on the highway from the Nile to the Euphrates, Esdraelon was at distant intervals the war-path or battle-field of great empires, but more regularly the prey and pasture of the Arabs, who with each spring came upon it over Jordan. Even when there has been no invasion to fear, Esdraelon has still suffered: when she has not been the camp of the foreigner she has served as the estate of her neighbours. Ten years ago the peasants got rid of the Arabs of the desert, only to be bought up by Greek capitalists from Beyrout.

II. Another thing you see most clearly from Jezreel is the reason of the names given to the Great Plain and its offshoots. These names are two: Vale, or Deepening, and Plain or Opening; the former is connected with the name of Jezreel, the latter with that of Megiddo.

II. The two names.

(1) The Vale of Jezreel. The word for Vale, 'Emeq, literally *deepening*, is a highlander's word for a valley as he looks *down* into it, and is never applied to any extensive plain away from hills, but always to wide avenues running up into a mountainous country like the Vale of Elah, the Vale of Hebron, and the Vale of Ajalon.[1] We should, therefore, expect the word, when associated with Jezreel, to apply not to the great Central Plain west of Jezreel, but to the broad deep vale east of Jezreel, which descends to Jordan, between Moreh and Gilboa. And in fact it is so applied in the story of Gideon's campaign. There it is said that the Midianites when they passed over Jordan *pitched in the Vale of Jezreel*,[2] to the *north of the well of Harod from the hill of*

(1) The Vale of Jezreel.

[1] See Appendix, I.

[2] Judges vi. 33.

Moreh into the vale ;[1] and again that *the camp of Midian was in the valley beneath* Gideon, who presumably occupied, like Saul, the heights of Gilboa above the wells. The same identification suits the other passages where the *Vale of Jezreel* is mentioned,[2] and we conclude that in the Old Testament it means only the valley down which Jezreel looks to Jordan, and not the plain across which Jezreel looks to Carmel.[3] But in later times it is this latter which is called after Jezreel—not indeed now the *Vale* of Jezreel, but *the Great Plain of Esdrelom*, or *Esdrēlon.*[4] This name has survived to the present day, not in the local dialect, but in various Greek and Latin forms, as Stradēla,[5] or Istradēla,[6] Esdraelon.

(2) The Plain of Megiddo. While ‘Emeq means *deepening*, the word used here, Biq‘ah, means *opening*. From its origin—a verb *to split*—one would naturally take it to be a valley more narrow than ‘Emeq, a cleft or gorge. But it is applied to broad vales like that of Jordan under Hermon or at Jericho, though never to table-lands nor to maritime plains like Sharon. The Arabic equivalent is to-day the name of the vale between the Lebanons, as well as of some other level tracts in Syria surrounded by hills. A surrounding of hills seems necessary to the name Biq‘ah, as if it were to be translated, land *laid open*, or *lying open*, in the midst of hills. And this is just what the great Central Plain of Esdraelon

(2) The Plain of Megiddo.

[1] Judges vii. 1 ; cf. 12.

[2] Joshua xvii. 16 ; Hosea i. 5.

[3] So correctly the *P.E.F.* map, ed. 1890.

[4] Book of Judith i. 8, *τό μέγα πεδίον* 'Εσδρηλώμ ; cf. iii. 9, iv. 6, 'Εσδρηλών, but again with μ in vii. 3.

[5] The *Jerusalem Itinerary.*

[6] *Bordeaux Pilgrim*, 333 A.D. ; another MS., Stradela, ed. *P.P.T.*, 17. In Fetellus (1130) Jezrahel.

is,—girt by hills on all sides, laid open or gaping in the midst of the main range of Palestine.[1]

Where was Megiddo?

The name of Megiddo has not survived, like that of Jezreel, and there is controversy as to what site it represents. On the base of the Central Plain just opposite Jezreel is a place called Lejjun—the Roman Legio, Legion. As Jezreel commands the mouth of the valley towards the Jordan, so Legio guards the mouth of the chief pass towards Sharon. It was, therefore, as important a site as Jezreel, and as likely to give its name to the plain. In Roman times it did so. Jerome calls the Great Plain both the Plains of Megiddo and the Campus Legionis.[2] Moreover, the only town definitely named in the immediate neighbourhood of Megiddo—*Taanach upon the waters of Megiddo*[3]—is undoubtedly the present Tannuk, four miles from Lejjun;[4] and there even seems a trace of the name in the name the Arabs give to Kishon, the Muquṭṭa‘. Omitting this last item, we have enough of evidence to support Robinson's identification of Lejjun with Megiddo, even against a plausible rival which Major Conder has favoured in Mujedda‘, a site with considerable ruins at the foot of Gilboa, above the Jordan and near Beisan.[5] I have put in a note what

[1] See Appendix I.

[2] Plains of Megiddo, in his *Pilgrimage of St. Paula*, iv.; Campus Legionis, in the *Onomasticon*, where Eusebius, whom he translates, has *τῷ μεγαλῳ πεδίῳ τῆς Λεγεῶνος*, etc., artt. *'Αρβηλά*, *Βαιθακάθ*, *Γαβαθών*, etc.

[3] Judges v. 19.

[4] How names change! Legio is the Crusading Legio, Ligio and Lyon. In a Bull of Alexander IV. (of 30th Jan. 1255), containing an inventory of the possessions of the Abbey of St. Mary in the Vale of Jehoshaphat, we find 'the Church of Ligio with parish and tithes,' as well as 'the Manor of Thanis,' *i.e.* Taanuk.

[5] Mujedda‘, both town and wady, are mentioned by Burckhardt, *Travels in Syria*, etc., July 2, 1813.

seem to me sufficient answers to Major Conder's argument against Lejjun, and need here only emphasise once more what is so evident as you stand at Jezreel—the equal right with Jezreel which Lejjun, commanding the other great gate to the plain, has to bestow its name upon the latter, as well as the fitness of calling that great triangle, opened among the hills, the Biq'ah, or Open-Ground of Megiddo.[1]

[1] Major Conder's argument against Lejjun, and in favour of Mujedda', as the site of Megiddo, is threefold. He says (1) that Megiddo is as often mentioned—save once—with Bethshan as with Taanach; (2) that Muquṭṭa' is not a possible transformation of Megiddo; and (3) that the site on the Jordan Valley suits the narrative of the flight of Ahaziah (2 Kings ix.) better than the site by Lejjun does. On each of these points I think he fails to make out his case. Thus: (1) The phrase, *Taanach by the waters of Megiddo*, seems to me to put the Mujedda' site out of the question; Joshua xii. 21 sets Taanach and Megiddo next to Carmel and the coast (Dor, *i.e.* the present Tanturah); no possible definition of locality can be taken from the order of towns in Josh. xvii. 11, where the text is manifestly corrupt, nor from that in Judges i. 27, which, beginning with Bethshan, leaps over Gilboa to Taanach, then over Carmel to Dor, in the west, then back to Ibleam (possibly the present Bir Bela'meh, near Jenîn; cf. Black's *Joshua*, 'Sm. Camb. Bible for Schools,' xvii. 11) and Megiddo. In 1 Kings iv. 12 there is another confusion: Taanach, Megiddo, Bethshan, Abel-meholah, then back to Jokneam on Carmel. In 1 Chron. vii. 29 the order is Bethshan, Taanach, Megiddo, Dor, the correct order from east to west, if Lejjun be Megiddo. (2) Major Conder objects to the identification of Muquṭṭa' with Megiddo, that the palatal *t* in the Arab name is never the equivalent of the Hebrew *d*. Yet, in some cases, they have been interchanged (Wright's *Comparative Grammar*, p. 53). The deep *q* and the hard *g* are of course equivalents There remains the *'ain* at the end of Muquṭṭa' which is not in Megiddo, but this *'ain* is in Mujedda' as well, as to which Conder says that it is an equivalent of the Hebrew *n* in the form Megiddon. But it is not necessary to prove an equivalence between the modern and ancient words. Muquṭṭa' means *ford*, and it is not impossible that Arabs should, in the case of a river, substitute it for a name so very closely resembling it in sound, of which they did not know the meaning. This has happened frequently in Palestine itself and elsewhere. (3) With all deference to Major Conder, I think that Megiddo at Lejjun suits the story of the flight of Ahaziah far better than Mujedda' does. Let it be remembered that Jehu was driving up the Valley of Jezreel from Bethshan,

III. Now when we have made out Lejjun or Megiddo as a place of equal importance with Jezreel—each of them giving its name to the plain, as well as holding a chief gateway into it—we are ready to mark the next fact about Esdraelon which the view from Jezreel towards Megiddo renders clear. This is, that the passage which Esdraelon afforded across Palestine was not that which seems at first the more natural, viz., from the Plain of Acre by the glen through which Kishon breaks at Tell el Kasis, but that which comes over from the Plain of Sharon by the pass at Megiddo. Look from Jezreel, and at once you see this to be possible. The Plain of Acre is not more visible to you than the Plain of Sharon; the Galilean hills intervene, and rise almost as high and broad between Esdraelon and Acre as the Samarian hills do

III. Esdraelon and Sharon.

and that Ahaziah's flight from him was, therefore, not so likely to be towards Bethshan as in an opposite direction. We do not know where the ascent of Gur was; Ibleam may be beside Jenîn. Overtaken and wounded here, on a path southward which Jehu afterwards pursued to Samaria, it was natural for Ahaziah's company to seek the only other route for chariots from the plain southwards—that by the pass leading over from Lejjun to Sharon. These objections against Robinson's argument being repelled, I think the case for Lejjun as Megiddo rests satisfactorily on these points: (1) that it is close to Taanach; (2) that the waters of Megiddo are practically Kishon (Judges v. 19); (3) that Lejjun is as likely to give its name to the plain as Jezreel is, and did so give it in the time of Jerome.

Since the foregoing was published in the *Expositor*, I have read Mr. Trelawney Saunders' reasons against Conder's theory (*P.E.F.Q.*, 1880, 223-224), and find that he also suggests the possibility of the derivation of Muquṭṭa' from Megiddo. With Saunders agrees Socin (*Z.D.P.V.* iv., 150, 151). Under the former's note the Rev. Dr. Henderson cites one strong argument for Mujedda', that in the *Travels of the Mohar* Megiddo is presumably close to Jordan. But this cannot stand against the mass of evidence which puts it near Taanach, and according to W. Max Müller, *Asien u. Europa*, p. 195 f., the writer has confused Kishon with Jordan. Müller also points out how often Megiddo is spelt with a 't' on the Egyptian monuments. See Additional Note at end of volume.

between Esdraelon and Cæsarea. Look at the way Carmel lies. You easily perceive that an army coming north by Sharon, whether it was making for the south of the Lake of Galilee at Bethshan, or for the north of the lake by the plateau above Tiberias, would not seek to compass the prolonged ridge of Carmel by the sea, and so enter Esdraelon from the Plain of Acre, for that would be a very roundabout road; but it would cut across the Samarian hills to the south of Carmel by the easy pass which issues at Megiddo. And so, in fact, armies from the south always came: the Philistines, when they shirked attacking Israel on the steep flanks of Benjamin and Ephraim, and camped by the most open gateway of the hill-country opposite Esdraelon;[1] Pharaoh Necho, when Josiah met him at Megiddo, and was beaten *when he met him*, and was slain, and *the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the Plain of Megiddo* became a proverb in Israel;[2] the Romans, who set a great garrison in Megiddo, and called it Legion; Napoleon, in 1799, who, although he was making for Acre, did not take the sea-path round Carmel, but also crossed into Esdraelon by Subbarin and Tell Keimun. If other proof be needed that in ancient times Esdraelon's connection with the coast was south, and not north, of Carmel, we find it in that singular list of towns so frequently given in the Old Testament—Bethshan, Taanach, Megiddo, Dor. These formed a strategical line of fortresses on the one great avenue across country,[3] yet that line did not run north, but south of Carmel. Megiddo and Taanach,

[1] *αἱ ἀναβάσεις τῆς ὀρεινῆς . . . ἡ εἴσοδος εἰς τὴν Ἰουδαίαν.* Judith iv. 6. See above, p. 356.

[2] 2 Chron. xxxv. 22; Zech. xii. 11. Hadadrimmon (LXX. *ῥοῶν*, a pomegranate plantation) is perhaps Rummaneh, close beside Lejjun.

[3] Josh. xvii. 11; Judges i. 27; 1 Kings iv. 12; 1 Chron. vii. 29.

backed by Bethshan, were not in line with Acre or Haifa, but with Dor, the present Tanturah, a few miles to the north of Cæsarea. Nothing could be clearer than this. The break across Palestine which Esdraelon affords is a break into Sharon, and not into the Plain of Acre. And, indeed, the roads from Acre to the interior of the country, whether making for Jordan above or below the lake, travelled then, as they do now, through the long parallel valleys of Lower Galilee. If any caravans entered Esdraelon from Acre, it was in order to seek a gateway to Samaria at Jenîn, or to cross to Sharon by the pass of Megiddo.[1] Few armies going north or south kept to the beach below Carmel ; if those of the Ptolemies and Antiochi did so, it was because the Jews held the hills up to Carmel ; if Richard, in the Third Crusade, did so,[2] it was because those hills were all in the possession of the Saracen.

IV. The Gateways of Esdraelon.

IV. We have followed the natural avenues to Esdraelon from the rest of the land. Let us now review the points at which they enter the Great Plain ; for it is from these, of course, that its various campaigns were directed. The entrances are five in number, and all visible from Jezreel. Three are at the corners of the triangle—the pass of the Kishon at Tell el Kasis, the glen between Tabor and the Nazareth hills, and the valley southward behind Jenîn. The first of these is

[1] We have an incidental proof that travellers preferred this road ; in 382, St. Paula, travelling from Ptolemais to Cæsarea, did not keep to the sea, but crossed the plains of Megiddo by the deathplace of Josiah. Jerome's *Life of St. Paula*, iv.

[2] Vinsauf, *Itiner. Ricard.* iv. 12-14. Cestius also took the sea road, Josephus, ii. *Wars*, xviii. So did Napoleon in his retreat, *Guerre de l'Orient ; Campagnes d'Egypte et de Syrie*, ii. 104. The new railway from the coast to Jordan keeps, of course, to the north of Carmel.

the way of advance from the Plain of Acre;[1] Harosheth of the Gentiles, from which Sisera advanced, lies upon it. The second is the road down from the plateau above Tiberias, and Northern Galilee generally; it is commanded by Tabor, on which there was always a fortress. The third is the passage towards that series of meadows which lead up from Esdraelon into the heart of Samaria—the Anabaseis of the Hill-country.[2] The other two gateways to the Great Plain were, of course, Megiddo and Jezreel. Megiddo guarded the natural approach of Philistines, Egyptians, and other enemies from the south; Jezreel that of Arabs, Midianites, Syrians of Damascus, and other enemies from the east.

V. The History of Esdraelon.

V. With our eyes on these five entrances, and remembering that they are not merely glens into neighbouring provinces, but passes to the sea and to the desert—gates on the great road between the empires of Euphrates and Nile, between the continents of Asia and Africa—we are ready for the arrival of those armies of all nations whose almost ceaseless contests have rendered this plain the classic battle-ground of Scripture. Was ever arena so simple, so regulated for the spectacle of war? Esdraelon is a vast theatre, with its clearly-defined stage, with its proper exits and entrances. We will still watch it from Jezreel.

(1) Very significantly, the first of the historical battles of Esdraelon was one in which Israel overcame not only a foreign tyrant, but the use which that tyrant made of the

[1] Though from Acre itself a more usual road lay farther north across the slopes of the Galilean hills.

[2] See above, pp. 356, 389.

plain for the purpose of preventing Israel's unity. On the eve of Deborah's appearance in Israel, Esdraelon, which had been assigned to Issachar, was still in possession of the Canaanites, and scoured by their chariots.[1] This meant not only that the entrances to the hill-country of Israel were in Canaanite hands, but that the northern tribes, Zebulun and Naphtali, were wholly cut off from the southern, Manasseh, Ephraim, Benjamin, and the still ineffective Judah.[2] The Canaanite camp was at Harosheth, probably the present Harithiyeh, on the Kishon pass, where it must have paralysed the maritime tribes of Asher and Dan.[3] The evil, therefore, was far greater than the oppression of Issachar; it affected the national existence of Israel, and its removal was the concern of all her tribes. This is emphasised by both of the two accounts of the revolt. The Song of Deborah, without doubt a contemporary document, mentions every tribe for praise or blame, according as it took part or did not, except the tribe of Judah.[4] The prose account, which precedes the song,[5] names only the northern tribes, but describes the leaders as belonging to both ends of Israel—Deborah to Mount Ephraim, near Bethel, and Barak to Kedesh-Naphtali.[6] With regard to the battle itself, the

(1) Barak and Sisera.

[1] Both Oort (*Atlas*, iv.) and Guthe (in Droysen's *Hist. Hand Atlas*) mark a band of Israelite territory across Esdraelon, so as to include Jezreel. But this is very improbable, for it shuts up the Canaanites, who were all-powerful on the plain, in a little enclosure about Bethshan—a blockade which could not have been maintained by the oppressed and weakened Israel. Cf. Budde, *Ri. u. Sa.* 46.

[2] Judah is not mentioned in Deborah's Song, nor, of course, Levi.

[3] See p. 174. They abode by their ships.

[4] Machir stands for Manasseh, Gilead for Gad.

[5] Judges iv.

[6] When we have grasped the national significance of the crisis, we do not feel the force of the objections brought against the distance which chapter iv. puts between Deborah's and Barak's homes (see Budde, *Ri. u. Sa.* p. 105

two accounts agree as to the chief actors, the help given to Israel by Jehovah,[1] the battle-field upon Kishon, the total defeat of the Canaanites, and the murder of Sisera by Jael. In addition, the prose narrative introduces Jabin, king of Canaan, at Hazor,[2] names Harosheth as Sisera's camp, and Tabor as the tryst of the Israelites, and gives a different account of the way in which Jael struck her fell blow.[3] With the first and the last of these we have nothing to do here. The addition of Harosheth and Tabor is in harmony with the geographical data, and it was natural to introduce them in a prose narrative, where more attention would be paid than in the song to tactical details. Accepting, then, all the geographical contributions of chapter iv. in supplement to the rapid sketch of the

Cooke, *The Song and Hist. of Deborah*, p. 11; Wellhausen, *Proleg.*, Eng. ed., 241). There was no reason for inventing it, and it is natural in the circumstances. Chapter v. implies that *all* the tribes which lay on the Central Range were roused, and certainly does not indicate, as some have alleged ver. 15 indicates, that both Deborah and Barak belonged to Issachar. On chapter iv. see A. B. Davidson, *Expositor*, January 1889.

[1] Wellhausen's contrast between the two chapters on this point is manifestly overdrawn. *Proleg.*, Eng. ed., 241 f.

[2] The song speaks of *kings of Canaan* (v. 19). Some have attributed the insertion of Jabin's name to an editor (Bertheau, *Richter*, 2nd ed.; Dillmann on Josh. xi. 1); but others, following Kuenen (Wellhausen, Budde, Cooke, Driver), hold that the chapter is woven from two distinct narratives—one of Sisera's defeat by Deborah and Barak on Kishon, as in chapter v.; the other of a battle by Zebulun and Naphtali against Jabin on the northern Jordan. This, however, is far from proved or probable, for (1) there is no reason why two such stories should have got mixed (as Budde owns, p. 62). The appearance of a Barak in both has been suggested as a reason, but a double Barak would be as great a difficulty as a double Jabin (here and in Josh. xi.). (2) The attempt to distinguish the two narratives (Bruston, 'Les deux Jéhovistes,' in the *Rev. de Théol. et Phil.*, 1886) has failed. (3) Chapter iv. as it stands is a consistent account. On the alleged discrepancy between vv. 16 and 22, see below, p. 396, n. 1. Even if the Jabin portion were detachable, this would not affect the other divergences of chapter iv. from chapter v., especially the mention of Harithiyeh and Tabor.

[3] On this see Cooke, *op. cit.*; Robertson Smith, *O.T.J.C.*

fighting in chapter v., we may take the following as a full account of the battle.

The Battle of the Kishon.

The hands of the prophetess of Mount Ephraim were required to loosen the spring of the revolt, but the spring itself was found among the northern tribes: to them belonged the military leader, Barak, and this determined the place of muster not in Gilboa where Gideon and Saul, southern chiefs, afterwards assembled their forces, but in the strong corner at Tabor, where the main road enters the plain from Northern Galilee. To this, in the loose disposition of Oriental warfare—compare Gideon's and Saul's traverse of the plain by night in presence of the enemy [1]—it would be easy for the southern tribesmen to cross, unless indeed we are to imagine, and it is not unlikely, that the Canaanites were attacked by Israel from both sides of the plain. It is not necessary to suppose that Barak arranged his men high up Tabor; though Tabor, an immemorial fortress, was there to fall back upon in case of defeat. The headquarters of the muster were probably in the glen, at Tabor's foot, in the village Deburieh—perhaps a reminiscence of Deborah herself—which also in Roman times was occupied by the natives of Galilee in their revolt against the foreigner who held the Plain.[2] Here in the northern angle of Esdraelon, Barak watched till the lengthening line of his enemy's chariots drew out from the western angle at Tell el Kasis and stretched opposite to him, with Taanach and Megiddo behind them. They may even have turned north towards the Hebrew position. Then Barak

[1] Judges vii. and 1 Sam. xxix.

[2] Josephus (ii. *Wars*, xxi. 3) speaks of a garrison at Dabaritta, as it was called in his day, to 'keep guard on the Great Plain.'

gave them battle in a fierce highland charge: *into the valley* his thousands *rushed at his feet.* It has been supposed that with the charge a storm broke from the north, for *there was fighting from heaven,* according to the poem, and Kishon was in full flood :—

> *Torrent Kishon swept them away,*
> *Torrent of spates,*[1] *torrent Kishon!*

This means that the plain must already have been in a state in which it was impossible for chariots to manœuvre. As another great feature of the battle the poem remembers the plunging of horses :—

> *Then did the horse-hoofs stamp,*
> *By reason of the plungings, the plungings of their strong ones.*

The highland footmen had it all their own way. Their charge came with such impetuosity upon a labouring and divided foe, that the latter—and this, too, shows how far Canaan had advanced across the plain—were scattered both east and west. The main flight turned back towards Harosheth, and the slaughter and the drowning must have been great in the narrow pass. But Sisera himself, who doubtless was in the van of his army as he led it east, seems to have fled eastward still, for according to the prose narrative the tent of Heber the Kenite, where he sought rest and found death, lay *by the terebinth of Betsa'anîm by Kedesh* on the plateau above the Lake of Galilee. It is the same direction as the French military maps show the

[1] An obscure expression. The word is plural. The LXX. render it *of ancient times* or *deeds*—inappropriate in a song which celebrates the first of these. Others take it of *onsets, i.e. battles*, from an Arabic application of the root. But, from this same, it is possible to deduce the meaning of *onrushings of water, sudden floods* or *spates*, and this is the most natural. See Cooke, *op. cit.*, 48.

flight of the Turks to have taken in 1799, when Kleber's small squares, reinforced by Napoleon, broke up vastly superior numbers on the same field of Sisera's discomfiture.[1]

Barak's was a strange victory, in which highlanders had for once been helped, not hindered, by level ground. But the victory won that day by the Plain over the Canaanites was not so great as the victory won by Israel over the Plain. Esdraelon is broad and open enough to have been a frontier between two nations; but the unselfish tribes had overcome this difference between them. What in a century or two might have yawned to an impassable gulf, they had bridged once for all by their loyalty to the Ideal of a united people and a united fatherland. And the power of that Ideal was faith in a

[1] The above identification of the site of Kedesh is Major Conder's (*T. W.*). Cooke, *op. cit.*, 12 f., suggests Kedesh of Issachar (1 Chron. vi. 72, cf. 76; Joshua xii. 22) between Taanach and Megiddo, with which he would identify the Kedesh of Barak, counting it an error to call this latter Kedesh-Naphtali. But Kedesh of Issachar was too near the battle and too much under the hills of Manasseh for Sisera to flee there, and still less would he have gone to it, if it had been Barak's seat. The *plain of Zaanaim*, Eng. ver., is in the original *oak* or terebinth of Beṣa'ănaim (אֵלוֹן בְּצַעֲנַיִם, Q'ri בצעננים evidently one word as LXX. take it, and because אלון is in the genitive relation to ב״), mentioned also in Josh. xix. 33 as Beṣa'ănanîm, LXX. *βεσεμιὶν*, a place on the border of Naphtali. This is an additional argument against identifying Kedesh with K. of Issachar. The LXX. *βεσεμιὶν* has suggested Kh. Bessûm in the plateau west of the Lake, the name Kedesh lies east below, and Damieh, perhaps the Adami of Josh. xix. 33, close by north-west. Conder's choice, therefore, is well supported. The only other point is the alleged discrepancy between iv. 16, where Barak pursues the Canaanites *west* to Harosheth, and 22 where he pursued Sisera to Kedesh, *i.e. east*, if the above identification be correct. Now the double flight of the Canaanites, west and east, was very probable, for in both directions lay Canaanite towns. If so, Barak might despatch the main pursuit west, while he himself turned east after Sisera. To read the narrative as if it stated that Barak undertook *in person* both pursuits, is to treat it with a rigour which would force inconsistencies upon any succinct historical narrative.

common God. Well might Deborah open her song with the Hallelujah:—

> *For that the leaders took the lead in Israel,*
> *For that the people offered themselves willingly,*
> *Bless ye Jehovah.*

(2) The next invaders, whom Israel had to meet upon Esdraelon, were Arabs from over Jordan, eastern Midianites. This time therefore they drew to battle not upon Kishon and the western watershed, but at the head of the long vale running down to Bethshan; and as Manasseh was now the heart of the defence, the muster of Israel took place not at Tabor, but at Gilboa. *Gideon and all the people that were with him pitched above the well of Harod, and the camp of Midian was to the north of him from Moreh into the Vale.* That is to say, the Midianites took up practically the same position about Shunem as we shall see the Philistines occupy before their defeat of Saul.[1] Due south across the head of the Vale is the rugged end of Gilboa—Jezreel standing off it—and on this Gideon, like Saul, drew up his men. The only wells are three, all lying in the Vale: one by Jezreel itself, one out upon the plain, and one close under the steep banks of Gilboa. The first and second of these lie open to the position of the Midianites, and tradition has rightly fixed on the third and largest, now called the 'Ain Jalûd, as the well of Harod.[2] It bursts some fifteen feet broad and two

(2) Gideon and Midian.

Gideon's tactics.

[1] It is doubtful how far the name Moreh extended eastward, but if the Beth-shittah of Judges vii. 22 be the present Shutta, then Moreh must be to the west of that, and is probably, as put above, the hill above Shunem, now known as Jebel Duhy.

[2] See *P.E.F. Survey* large map. 'Ain el Meiyiteh is under Jezreel. 'Ain Tuba'un, where Saladin camped in 1187 ('Fons Tubania;' Will. of Tyre, xxii. 26), is on the plain. The name 'Ain Jalûd is interesting. Boha-ed-

deep from the very foot of Gilboa, and mainly out of it, but fed also by the other two springs, flows a stream considerable enough to work six or seven mills. The deep bed and soft banks of this stream constitute a formidable ditch in front of the position on Gilboa, and render it possible for the defenders of the latter to hold the spring at their feet in face of an enemy on the plain : and the spring is indispensable to them, for neither to the left, right, nor rear is there any other living water. Thus the conditions of the narrative in Judges vii. are all present, though it must be left to experts to say whether ten thousand men could be deployed in the course of an evening from the hill behind to the spring and the stream that flows from it. Anybody, however, who has looked across the scene can appreciate the suitability of the test which Gideon imposed on his men. The stream, which makes it possible for the occupiers of the hill to hold also the well against an enemy on the plain, forbids them to be careless in their use of the water ; for they drink in face of that enemy, and the reeds and shrubs which mark its course afford ample cover for hostile ambushes. Those Israelites, therefore, who *bowed themselves down on their*

Din (*Vit. Salad.* ch. xxiv.) calls it 'Ain el Jâlût or well of Goliath, with whose slaughter by David the *Jerusalem Itinerary* connects Jezreel (*Jerus. Itin.* ed. *P.P.T.*, see Stradela). But Jalût and the association with Goliath may both be due to a mishearing of Jalûd. And Jalûd has a striking resemblance to the Gile'ad of v. 3 of the story. It does not contain the letter 'ain, which the latter has, but we have many cases of 'ain being replaced by a long vowel. Major Conder, tempted by the name, has suggested the 'Ain el Jem'ain, or Well of the Two Troops, at the foot of Gilboa, near Bethshan, as the well of Harod. But, in a pass which has been the scene of countless bivouacs and forays, it is futile to suppose that this name may refer to Gideon's two troops ; while if, as all are agreed, Shutta represents Beth-shittah, we must suppose the Arab position and Gideon's camp to the south of it to lie west of Shutta, up the vale. Gile'ad may be a misreading for Gilboa.

knees, drinking headlong, did not appreciate their position or the foe; whereas those who merely crouched, lapping up the water with one hand, while they held their weapons in the other and kept their face to the enemy, were aware of their danger, and had hearts ready against all surprise. The test in fact was a test of attitude, which, after all, both in physical and moral warfare, has proved of greater value than strength or skill—attitude towards the foe and appreciation of his presence. In this case it was particularly suitable. What Gideon had in view was a night march and the sudden surprise of a great host—tactics that might be spoiled by a few careless men. Soldiers who behaved at the water as did the three hundred, showed just the common-sense and vigilance to render such tactics successful. First, however, Gideon himself explored the ground—two miles in breadth between his men and the Arab tents; and heard, holding his breath the while, the talk of the two sentries, which revealed to him what stuff for panic Midian was. The rest is easily told. It was the middle watch—that dead of the night against which our Lord also warned His disciples.[1] The wary men, behind a leader who had made himself familiar with the ground, touched without alarm the Arab lines. They carried lights, as Syrian peasants do on windy nights,[2] in earthen pitchers, and they had horns hung upon them.[3] They blew the horns, brake the pitchers, flashed their lights—that to the startled Arabs must have seemed the torchbearers and pointsmen of an immense host—and

[1] Judges vii. 19 f., Luke xii. 38.

[2] Thomson, *The Land and the Book.*

[3] If every man had a pitcher and a torch in it, he had no room in his hands for a horn. Every man had a horn, and probably it is implied a light and pitcher too (ver. 16).

shouted, *The sword! for Jehovah and Gideon!* But no sword was needed. Cumbered by their tents and cattle, the Midianites, as in several other instances of Arab warfare, fell into a panic, drew upon each other, and finally *fled* down the Vale *to Beth-shittah, to Ṣereda* near Bethshan,[1] *unto the lip of Abelmeholah*, the deep bank over which the Vale of Jezreel falls into the valley of the Jordan, *above* the now unknown *Tabbath*.[2]

The rout.

(3) The next campaign on Esdraelon — that of the Philistines against Saul—is more difficult to understand. It is uncertain whether the narrative (1 Sam. xxviii.-xxxi.) runs in our Bibles in the proper order; and we do not know where Aphek lay.

(3) Saul and the Philistines.

As the narrative now runs, the Philistines gather to war against Israel (xxviii. 1), and camp at Shunem, whereupon Saul gathers Israel, and camps on Gilboa (v. 4) the Philistines then assemble at Aphek, and Israel pitches by a fountain in Jezreel (xxix. 1); the battle is joined, and Israel flee, and are slain in mount Gilboa (xxxi. 1). This order implies that Aphek was close to Shunem, on the line of the Philistine advance on Gilboa; and accordingly it has been sought for, both at

Order of the narrative.

[1] 2 Chron. iv. 17, where it is described as in the Plain of Jordan. It is the same as Ṣartan, 1 Kings vii. 46; cf. Josh. iii. 16; 1 Kings iv. 12.

[2] In the above I have followed the plain course of the text, for it suits throughout the geographical conditions. But the reader ought to know that there are very great difficulties about parts of the narrative. Why should the Ephraimites afterwards complain of being called out too late, and Gideon represent that the work had been done by Abi'ezer alone (viii. 1, 2), if vi. 35 assures us that Gideon had already summoned the four tribes? No doubt most of them were sent back after the test, but there is no sign that those who passed the test were only Abi'ezrites. Because of this some critics (cf. Budde, *Ri. u. Sa.* 111 ff.) strike out vi. 35, and the story of the test vii. 2-8, and so leave the narrative to run as if Gideon never had more than 300 men, all from Abi'ezer, till after the defeat of Midian was achieved.

Fuleh on the Plain, where the Crusaders had a castle and Kleber's squares, in 1799, beat back the Turks; and at Fuku'a, on Gilboa itself, on the road from Jenîn to Beth-shan across the hill, as if the Philistines moved from Shunem to the south-east of Saul's position, and attacked him from the rear, and upon his own level. But neither of these sites has been proved to be Aphek.[1]

In the order of the Philistines' advance, however, ought not Shunem to be placed *after* Aphek? Probably we should rearrange the chapters of the narrative, so as to put xxix.-xxx. between the second and third verses of xxviii. Then the order of events would run: the Philistine muster (xxviii. 1); their gathering to Aphek and the encampment of Israel by the fountain which is in Jezreel (xxix. 1); the Philistines' advance towards Jezreel (*id.* 11); their camp on Shunem and Israel's on Gilboa (xxviii. 4); the battle on Gilboa (xxxi. 1).[2] On this order, the uncertainties are the position of Aphek and that of the fountain which is in Jezreel. Some have placed Aphek in Sharon, at the mouth of an easy pass into Samaria, identifying it with the Aphek of the previous Philistine invasion, when the ark was taken.[3] But this has not been proved, and in

[1] It is extremely unlikely that the Philistines should move from Shunem to the present Fuleh, for the latter is farther off than Shunem from Gilboa. It is Major Conder who suggests Fuku'a. We passed over the road from Jenîn to Beth-shan. From the plain up to Fuku'a the road is easy for chariots, and about Fuku'a there is open ground. But the ground between that and the part of Gilboa above the 'Ain Jalûd is broken by glens. Besides, there is no affinity between the names Aphek and Fuku'a.

[2] So Reuss, Budde, etc.

[3] 2 Sam. iv. 1. See chs. x. and xvii. On the identification of the two Apheks at which the Philistines pitched, see Wellh. *Hist.* Eng. Ed. p. 39, and Robertson Smith, *O.T.J.C.* p. 435. They go farther and absorb in this Aphek, the Aphek from which the Syrians attacked Samaria (1 Kings xx. 26). This is quite out of the question.

connection with the passage before us, it is hard to believe that Saul's advance to the Plain of Esdraelon, which is given as simultaneous with the Palestine gathering at Aphek, should have taken place while the Philistines were still in Sharon, for that would have been to leave all Benjamin and Ephraim undefended to their pleasure. Saul must have *followed* the Philistines to Esdraelon ; and it is almost impossible to think of him leaving Jenîn, the great entrance to the hill-country of Israel,[1] and advancing to Gilboa till he saw the Philistines move across the plain to Shunem. In this case, while Aphek remains unknown, we might take *the fountain which is in Jezreel* to be the great fountain at Jenîn, 'Ain Gannim, *Jezreel* being intended for the whole district. That would give us a consistent story of the earlier stages of the campaign.[2]

The Battle of Mount Gilboa.

However that may be, the rest is clear. The Philistines had entered Esdraelon—doubtless by Megiddo. Had their aim been the invasion of the hill-country, they would have turned south-east to Jenîn, and Saul would have met them there. That, instead, we find them striking north-east to Shunem, at the head of the Vale of Jezreel, proves that at least their first intention had to do with the Valley of the Jordan. Either they had come to subjugate all the low country, and so confine Israel, as the Canaanites did, to the hills, or else they sought to secure their caravan route to Damascus and the East, from Israel's descents upon it by the roads from Bezek to Bethshan and across Gilboa.[3] In either

[1] See p. 356.

[2] The only other alternative, of supposing two differing narratives, one of which assigns the Philistine muster to Aphek, the other to Shunem, is not so probable.

[3] This would afford a parallel to their occupation of Michmash (1 Sam. xiii. 5)

case Saul must not be permitted to remain where he was, for from Gilboa he could descend with equal ease upon Esdraelon and the Valley of the Jordan. They attacked him, therefore, on his superior position. Both the narrative of the battle and the great Elegy in which the defeat was mourned imply that the fighting was upon the heights of Gilboa, and yet upon ground over which cavalry and chariots might operate.[1] The Philistines could not carry Saul's position directly from Shunem, for that way the plain dips, and the deep bed of the stream intervenes and the rocks of Gilboa are steep and high.[2] But they went round Jezreel, and attacked the promontory of the hill by the easier slopes and wadies to the south, which lead up to open ground about the village of Nuris, and directly above the 'Ain Jalûd. Somewhere on these slopes they must have encountered that desperate resistance which cost Israel the life of three of the king's sons ; and somewhere higher up the gigantic king himself, wounded and pressed hard by the chariots and horsemen, yet imperious to the last, commanded his own death.[3]

on the trade-route from Ajalon to Jericho, and to the trace of Philistine occupation which appears in the name Beth-Dagon near Shechem, on the only other pass from east to west across the Central Range. On the Philistines as traders, see ch. ix.

[1] 1 Sam. xxxi. 1, *fell down wounded on Mount Gilboa* ; 2 Sam. i. 6, *upon Mount Gilboa, behold, Saul leaned on his spear ; and, lo, the chariots and the horsemen followed hard after him* ; cf. in the Elegy, vv. 19, *high places* ; 21, *Ye hills of Gilboa . . . for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away, Saul's shield* ; 25, *O Jonathan, slain on thy high places.* [2] See p. 398.

[3] The above view of the battle was formed on the ground, and I am glad to find that in the main it is the same as that of so expert an observer as Principal Miller, who surveyed the ground in detail, and gives both a gradual description of the course of the fight and careful plans, that include not only the contours of the ground, but what he believes to have been successive positions of the hard-pressed Israelites. Principal Miller exposes the errors in Dean Stanley's account, in which the battle is described as on the plain,

And David sang this dirge over Sha'ul and Jehonathan his son:[1] *Behold it is written in the Book of the Brave.*[2]

The Dirge.

Isra'el, the Beauty is slain on thy heights.
How fallen are the mighty!

Tell it not in Gath,
Publish it not in the streets of Ashkelōn!
Lest they rejoice, the daughters of the Philistines;
Lest they make triumph, the uncircumcised's daughters.

Hills of Gilboa,
Let not dew, let not rain be upon you,
Ye fields of discomfiture![3]
For there thrown to rust is the shield of the mighty,
Sha'ul's shield unanointed with oil.[4]

From the blood of the slain,
From the fat of the mighty,
Bow of Jehonathan drew not back,
Nor sword of Sha'ul came home empty.

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and only the flight on the hills. But surely he himself is not justified in declaring from xxix. 11 that the Philistines occupied the town of Jezreel before the battle. He conceives Saul's position on Gilboa to be due to his rash designs of adding to his kingdom the whole of Northern Palestine—rash, for so Saul left Benjamin and Ephraim undefended. This, however, is not certain. *The Least of all Lands*, ch. vi. Plans on pp. 151 and 171.

[1] Gloss: *He bade them teach the children of Judah dirges or lamentations*, reading קנות for קשת. [2] ישר, the Upright, Valiant.

[3] The text is ושדיתרומות, which is really unintelligible, as the Massoretes divide it, but by a very little alteration reads ושדי מהומות or ושדות, *fields of discomfitures, frustrations, wrecks.* Other readings are Lucian's הרי מָוֶת hills of death, which Renan follows, taking ושדי as a later variant that has been wrongly brought into the text from the margin; Stade's ושדי ערמות, *nor field of sheaves*; Klostermann's שדות רמיה. Another reading might be שדות ראמות, cf. Prov. xxiv. 7: Justi, *Nationalgesänge der Hebr.* i. 72, translates *Hohes Schlachtfeld.* Still another possibility is that דמים, the word for blood, is lurking among the last letters. This would be natural, for it is a common Semitic idea that no rain or dew will bless the spot stained by the blood of a slain man.

[4] The parallelism shows that the oil refers to the well-known practice of rubbing shields with oil to preserve them, and not to Saul, translating *as if he were not the Anointed.*

Sha'ul and Jehonathan, the lovely, the pleasant,
In their lives and in their death they were not divided:
Than eagles they were swifter,
Than lions more strong.

Daughters of Isra'el, weep for Sha'ul,
Who clothed you in scarlet with jewels;
Who brought up adorning of gold on your raiment

How fallen are the mighty!
In the midst of the battle
Jehonathan, on thy heights, is slain!

Anguish is mine for thy sake, O my brother!
Jehonathan, thou wert very fair to me!
Thy love to me was wonderful,
Passing the love of women.

How fallen are the mighty,
And perished the weapons of war!

(4) Josiah and Egypt.

(4) Esdraelon was the scene of another lamentation for another king in Israel. In Jeremiah's time it had long been prophesied that Egypt would come upon the land, but the people did not heed it, saying, *Pharaoh is but a rumour, the time appointed is past.* Jeremiah replied he should come, *as surely as Tabor is among the mountains, and as Carmel by the sea.*[1] And so he did by Megiddo, till his host filled the plain between these hills as solid and present a fact as either of them.[2] Josiah,

[1] Jer. xlvi. 18.

[2] It is doubtful whether Pharaoh Necho came to Syria by the usual land route, or, as Vespasian on one occasion sent his troops, by sea (Herod. ii. 158), and Cheyne suggests Dor as his landing-place (*Life and Time of Jerem.*, 96). But the only ground for the latter alternative is the conjunction in Herod. of Necho's ship-building with his campaign; and, if he had come by sea, he would surely have landed not at Dor, but at Acco, in which case, however, he would not have marched so far south again as Megiddo. The battle at Megiddo suits the land route. The Μάγδαλος of Herodotus is no doubt a corruption of Megiddon. Μενδή, in Jos. x. *Antt.* v. 1., is a patent error, מנדי for מגדו, and an interesting proof of the terrible risks which the place-names of Palestine have been subject to in seven or eight languages.

who had no need to put himself in Pharaoh's way, had rashly ventured opposition at Megiddo. But his army was routed, and himself mortally wounded as soon as they met.[1] *And Jeremiah made a dirge upon Josiah, and all the singing-men and the singing-women speak of Josiah in their dirges to this day. So they made them a custom in Israel; and, lo, they are written among The Dirges.*[2] And the *mourning of Hadadrimmon in the Vale of Megiddon* became a proverb in Israel.[3] The dirges of Jeremiah have perished, and, indeed, he himself deprecated the extremes to which this national lamentation was carried. Israel was approaching a greater calamity which would require all her tears:

The Battle of Megiddo.

> '*Weep not for the dead, nor bemoan him,*
> *But weeping weep for him that goeth away,*
> *For he shall never come back, nor see the land of his birth.*'[4]

(5) The rest of the historical scenes of Esdraelon, there is space only to enumerate. But perhaps the mere succession of them will impress us, more than detailed accounts could do, with the constant pageant of commerce, war, and judgment, which throughout the centuries has traversed this wonderful arena. From Jezreel you see the slaughter-place of the priests of Baal; you see Jehu's ride from Bethshan to the vineyard of Naboth at your feet; you see the enormous camp of Holofernes spreading from the hills above Jenîn, out to Kuamon in the plain;[5] you

(5) The Pageant of Esdraelon.

The Syrians.

[1] 2 Kings xxiii. 29, *as soon as he had seen him.*

[2] 2 Chron. xxxv. 24, 25.   [3] Zech. xii. 11.   [4] Jer. xxii. 10.

[5] Judith vii. 3. Κύαμων = bean-field, has been identified with Tell Keimun at the foot of Carmel; but some think to find it at Fuleh, which also means bean. The description of Κύαμων which is opposite Esdraelon (name of plain or of city ?) suits both Keimun and Fuleh.

see the marches and counter-marches of Syrians, Egyptians, and Jews in the Hasmonean days[1]—the elephants and engines of Antiochus, the litters of Cleopatra and her ladies. The Romans come and plant their camps and stamp their mighty names for ever on the soil, Legio and Kastra; Pompey, Mark Antony, Vespasian, and Titus pass at the head of their legions,[2] and the men of Galilee sally forth upon them from the same nooks in the hills of Naphtali from which their forefathers broke with Barak upon the chariots of Canaan.[3] After the Roman war comes the Roman peace, and for a great interval of centuries Esdraelon is no more blotted by the black tents of the Bedouin; but a broad civilisation grows between her and Arabia, and Jordan is bridged, and from the Greek cities of the Decapolis chariots and bands of soldiers, officials, and provincial wits on their way to Rome, pass to the ports of Cæsarea and Ptolemais.[4] In the fourth century Christian pilgrims arrive, and cloisters are built from Bethshan to Carmel.[5] Three centuries of this, and then through their old channel the Desert swarms sweep back, now united by a common faith,

The Romans.

Early Christians.

The Moslem.

[1] I Macc. xii. 41-52, recounting Trypho's treacherous capture of Jonathan Maccabeus, which added another to the woes and lamentations of this tragic plain. Jos. xiii. *Antt.* ix. 3: Demetrius II., defeated by Alexander Zabinas, falls back on Ptolemais (Acre). *Ibid.* x. 2, Hyrcanus moves between Sebaste and Scythopolis. *Ibid.* xii., Alexander Janneus takes Ptolemais, and fights with the Egyptian forces between that and Jordan, *cir.* 103 B.C. *Ib.* xiii. Cleopatra, mother of Ptolemy Lathŭrus, besieges Ptolemais, and meets Alexander Janneus in Bethshan. *Ib.* xiv. 1: So Demetrius Eucherus went up to Shechem at the call of the Pharisees. xv. 2: So Aretas must have come from Damascus to Adida.

[2] See references on p. 410.

[3] Jos. ii. *Wars*, xxi. 3.

[4] Cf. Mommsen's *Provinces of the Roman Empire*, Eng. Ed. II. ch. x.

[5] For authorities, see p. 17.

and with the vigour of a new civilisation; you see before them the rout of the Greek army up the Vale of Jezreel.[1] The Arabs stay for nearly five hundred years, obliterating the past, distorting the familiar and famous names. Then the ensigns of Christendom return. Crusading castles rise—on the Plain Sapham and Faba[2] under the black and white banner of the Templars, and high up on the ridge north of Bethshan—so high and far that it is called by the Arabs Star-of-the-Wind—Belvoir under the Red Cross of the Hospitallers.[3] Cloisters are rebuilt, and thriving villages, for justice and shelter given them, bring their tribute to the Abbey of Mount Tabor; pilgrims throng from all lands, and the holy memories are replanted—not always on their proper sites.[4] Once more by Bethshan the Arabs break the line of the Christian defence, and Saladin spreads his camp where Israel saw those of Midian and the Philistines;[5] through a long hot summer the castles of the Cross yield one by one, till Belvoir holds out alone, flying the Red Cross for eighteen months over a Saracen country. Finally, after two last forlorn hopes—one of Andrew of Hungary, who carried the Cross to the top of Tabor, and was beaten down again,[6] and one of Saint

The Crusades.

Return of the Moslem.

[1] See p. 359.

[2] 'The Bean:' also called La Fève and La Fene, Rey, *Col. Fr.* 439; Röhricht, *Z.D.P.V.* x. 231, 232. Known to the Saracens as El-Fûlah = 'The Bean.' Boha-ed-din *Saladin*, ch. 24., Abulfeda Ed. Schultens, p. 41.

[3] Arabic, Kaukab-el-Hawa; called by Franks also Delehawa: Prutz, *Z.D P.V.* p. 168.

[4] Röhricht, *op. cit.* on p. 17.

[5] At the fountain of Tubania, a little way out on the plain north of Jezreel, cf. p. 397 n. 2. This was in 1186 when Saladin had to retire, but he returned and won the decisive battle of Hattîn on 14th June 1187, and occupied Acre 9th July, took Jerusalem 1188, but Belvoir did not fall till Jan. 1189.

[6] Andrew in 1217, the Sixth Crusade; Louis in 1270, the Eighth Crusade.

Louis of France, who marched to Jordan and back—Esdraelon is closed to the arms of the West, till in 1799 Napoleon with his monstrous ambition of an Empire on the Euphrates, breaks into it by Megiddo, and in three months again, from the same fatal stage, falls back upon the first great Retreat of his career.

Napoleon.

What a Plain it is! Upon which not only the greatest empires, races, and faiths, east and west, have contended with each other, but each has come to judgment—on which from the first, with all its splendour of human battle, men have felt that *there was fighting from heaven, the stars in their courses were fighting*—on which panic has descended so mysteriously upon the best equipped and most successful armies, but the humble have been exalted to victory in the hour of their weakness—on which false faiths, equally with false defenders of the true faith, have been exposed and scattered—on which since the time of Saul wilfulness and superstition, though aided by every human excellence, have come to nought, and since Josiah's time the purest piety has not atoned for rash and mistaken zeal. The Crusaders repeat the splendid folly of the kings of Israel; and, alike under the old and the new covenant, a degenerate church suffers here her judgment at the hands of the infidel.

The Battle of Armageddon.

They go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world to gather them to the battle of the great Day of God Almighty . . . and He gathered them together unto a place called in the Hebrew tongue Har Megeddon.

NOTE TO PAGE 407.—REFERENCES TO THE ROMANS ON ESDRAELON.

Pompey, 64 B.C., xiv. *Antt.* iii. 4, iv. 5, Mark Antony under Gabinius, in the campaign under Gabinius, 57-55, *Ibid.* v. Cæsar, in 47 B.C., visited Syria by sea, *Ibid.* viii. 3 and 6, by sea to Cilicia, ix. 1: but we do not know where he touched (cf. Sueton. *Julius*, 35). Antony was again in Syria in 40 B.C., *Ibid.* xiii. 1 and from 36-33 partly, with Cleopatra in xv. *Antt.* iv., i. *Wars*, xviii., Plutarch, *Anton.* 36-51. Vespasian reached Ptolemais in 67 A.D. iii. *Wars*, ii. ff. Titus joined him, *Ibid.* iv. For these operations in Esdraelon and Lower Galilee, *Ibid.* vi. ff., cf. Sueton. *Vespasian*, 5. Tacitus, *Hist.* iv. 51.

CHAPTER XX

GALILEE



For this Chapter consult Maps I. and VI.

GALILEE

THIS name, which binds together so many of the most holy memories of our race, means in itself nothing more than The Ring. Galîl, as the easily slipping letters testify, is anything that rolls, or is round.[1] Like our circle, or circuit, it was applied geographically to any well-defined region, as, for example, the region east of Jerusalem, which Ezekiel calls *the Eastern Galilee*, or to *the Galilees of the Jordan*, or to *the Galilees of the Philistines*.[2] How it came to be the peculiar title of one district, and take rank among the most significant names of the world, was as follows. Gelîl ha-Gôîm—*Ring or Region of the Gentiles*, a phrase analogous to the German *Heidenmark*—was applied to the northern border of Israel, which was pressed and permeated

'Galilee of the Gentiles.'

[1] גליל (cf. the Greek *κυλ-ινδρον*), is used of balls, cylinders or rings (Esther i. 6; Cant. v. 14), or the leaf of a door turning on its hinge (1 Kings vi. 34).

[2] But in all these cases it was the feminine. הגלילה הקדמנה, the region to the east of Jerusalem (Ezek. xlvii. 8). Plural גלילות הירדן. the circles of Jordan (Josh. xxii. 10, 11); cf. '*links* of Forth.' גלילות פלשת (Joel iv. 4), circles of the Philistines (cf. Josh. xiii. 2). This name may possibly survive in the Crusaders' *Galilaea*, name of a casale, and 'tota Galilea,' name of a district in the neighbourhood of Cæsarea. Prutz, *Besitzungen des Johanniter-ordens in Pal. u. Syr. Z.D.P.V.* iv. 157 ff. with map. Prutz refers it to Kalkilye, but it is more probably the present Jelîl, in the same neighbourhood.

from three sides by foreign tribes. Thence the name gradually spread, till in Isaiah's time it was as far south as the Lake of Gennesaret.[1] By the time of the Maccabees it had reached the Plain of Esdraelon, and covered the whole of the most northerly of the three provinces into which, after the Exile, the land west of Jordan was divided.[2]

Galilee of the Jews.

The population remained far more Gentile than before. The Jews who settled in Galilee after the Return from Babylon were few, and about 164 B.C. Simon Maccabeus had to bring them all back to Judæa.[3] But the extension of the Jewish state under John Hyrcanus, 135-105, must have enabled many Jews to return to the attractive province without fear of persecution, and either that monarch or his successor added Galilee to his domains, and sought to enforce the law upon its inhabitants.[4] Very soon afterwards, in 104, Galilee had developed a loyalty to the Jewish state sufficient to throw off a strong invader.[5] From this time

[1] Isa. ix. 1 (Heb. viii. 23).

[2] In 1 Macc. the boundaries are indefinite. Galilee was still, in a sense, distinct from the Great Plain, xii. 47, 49; but it covered the neighbourhood of Ptolemais (Acre), v. 55.

[3] 1 Macc. v. 23. Schürer (*Hist.* i. 1, 192) rightly corrects Keil on this verse.

[4] Schürer (*Hist.* i. 1, 294) thinks that the Jewish conquest of Galilee was not made till Aristobulus I. 105-104 B.C. But the conquest of Ituræan territory N.E. of Galilee, which is mentioned by Josephus (xiii. *Antt.* xi. 3) as the only triumph of the brief reign of Aristobulus, could hardly have been undertaken without the previous conquest of Galilee by his predecessor; and with this agrees the ambiguous statement that Hyrcanus had his son Alexander brought up in Galilee (*ib.* xii. 1). In the opening of next reign, Alexander Janneus (104-78), we find Galilee so thoroughly Jewish that Ptolemy Lathurus has difficulty in his siege of Asochis, and is unable to take Sepphoris (*ib.* 4, 5). This seems to require, for the Judaising of Galilee, an earlier date in the reign of John Hyrcanus.

[5] See previous Note.

onwards it was, therefore, natural to drop out of her name the words, *of the Gentiles*, which were before this time not always used, but the definite article was retained, and throughout the New Testament she was known as The Galilee. It was, we can understand, pleasing to the patriotism of her proud inhabitants to call their famous and beautiful province, *The* Region.[1]

The Boundaries of Galilee.

The natural boundaries of Galilee are obvious. South the Plain of Esdraelon (and we have seen why this frontier should be the southern and not the northern edge of the plain[2]); north, the great gorge of the Litâny or Kasimiyeh,[3] cutting off Lebanon; east, the valley of the Jordan and the Lake of Gennesaret; and west, the narrow Phœnician coast. This region coincides pretty closely with the territories of four tribes—Issachar, Zebulun, Asher, and Naphtali. But the sea-coast, claimed for Zebulun and Asher, never belonged either to them or to the province of Galilee: it was always Gentile. On the other hand, owing to the weakness of the Samaritans, Carmel was reckoned to Galilee when it was not in the hands of the men of Tyre;[4] and the eastern

[1] הגליל (Josh. xx. 7, xxi. 32; 1 Chron. vi. 76). ארץ הגליל (1 Kings ix. 11). גליל הגוים (Isa. viii. 23). In 2 Kings xv. 29, את-הגלילה, it is not the feminine form, but the masculine, with ה paragog., that is used. The feminine גלילה is not applied in Hebrew to Galilee (for its uses see p. 413, n. 1.) But the LXX. render הגליל *ἡ Γαλιλαία*. In Isa. viii. 23 (LXX. and Eng. ix. 1) *Γαλιλαία τῶν ἐθνῶν*. In the Apocrypha it is *Γαλιλαία* Ἀλλόφυλων (cf. 1 Macc. v. 15, etc.). The definite article is omitted only in 1 Macc. x. 30. And so in the N.T. it is *ἡ Γαλιλαία*, the definite article being omitted only twice.

[2] See p. 379.

[3] Too readily assumed to be the Lion River, Leontes (*Λέοντος ποτάμοι ἐκβολάι*) of Ptolemy, v. 15, which he places between Sidon and Beyrout, and which, if he was right, may be the Botrenus, the present Nahr el Awleh. There is no connection between the names Litâny and Leontes.

[4] Josephus, iii. *Wars*, iii. 1. See p. 338.

shores of Gennesaret also fell within the province.[1] Exclusive of these two additions, Galilee measured about fifty miles north to south, and from twenty-five to thirty-five east and west. The area was only about 1600 square miles, or that of an average English shire.

From the intricacy of its highlands, the map of Galilee seems at first impossible to arrange to the eye. But, with a little care, the ruling features are distinguished, and the whole province falls into four divisions. There is the Jordan Valley with its two lakes, that singular chasm, which runs along the east of Galilee, sinking from Hermon's base to more than 700 feet below the level of the ocean.[2] From this valley, and corresponding roughly to its three divisions,—below the Lake of Tiberias, the lake itself, and above the lake,—three belts or strips run westward: *first*, the Plain of Esdraelon; *second*, the so-called Lower Galilee, a series of long parallel ranges, all below 1850 feet, which, with broad valleys between them, cross from the plateau above Tiberias to the maritime plains of Haifa and Acre; and *third*, Upper Galilee, a series of plateaus, with a double water-parting, and surrounded by hills from 2000 to 4000 feet.[3] As you gaze

The divisions of Galilee.

[1] Thus, Judas who led the revolt against them in 6 A.D. is called the Galilean, ἀνὴρ Γαλιλαῖος (Josephus ii. *Wars*, viii. 1), although he belonged to Gamala in Gaulanîtis (xviii. *Antt.* i. 1). Just in the same way at this day 'the whole coast district is under the administration of the Kada Tubaríya.' (Schumacher, *The Jaulân*, p. 103.) It is the most convenient arrangement.

[2] Opposite Bethshan.

[3] The division between Upper and Lower Galilee is very evident on the map. It runs, roughly speaking, from the north end of the Lake of Galilee (or to the south of Safed), by the Wady Maktul leading up from the Plain of Gennesaret, thence by the level ground between Kefr Anân and er Rameh due west towards Acre. South of this line there is no height of over 1850 feet, the peaks run from 1000 to 1850, with Jebel es Sih 1838, and Tabor 1843. But north of this line the steep constant wall of the northern plateau rises almost immediately, and figures from 2000 to 3000 are frequent on the

north from the Samarian border, these three zones rise in steps above one another to the beginnings of Lebanon; and from the north-east, over the gulf of the Jordan, the snowy head of Hermon looks down athwart them.

The controlling feature of Galilee is her relation to these great mountains. A native of the region has aptly described it in the picture he gives of God's grace. *I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall blossom as the lily, and cast forth his roots like Lebanon.*[1] Galilee is literally the *casting forth of the roots of Lebanon.* As the supports of a great oak run up above ground, so the gradual hills of Galilee rise from Esdraelon and Jordan and the Phœnician coast, upon that tremendous northern mountain. It is not Lebanon, however, but the opposite range of Hermon, which dominates the view. Among his own roots Lebanon is out of sight; whereas that long, glistening ridge, that stands aloof, always brings the eye back to itself. In summer, hot harvesters from every field lift their hearts to Hermon's snow; and the heavy dews of night they call his gift. How closely Hermon was identified with Galilee, is seen from his association with the most characteristic of the Galilean hills: *Tabor and Hermon rejoice in Thy name.*[2]

The Lebanons and Galilee.

To her dependence on the Lebanons Galilee owes her

map. The Talmud marks this line of division as follows: 'Upper Galilee above Kefar Hananyah, a country where sycomores are not found; Lower Galilee below Kefar Hananyah, which produces sycomores.' Kefar Hananyah is no doubt the present Kefr Anân. Josephus gives the breadth of Lower Galilee (north and south) as from Xaloth, at the roots of Tabor, to Berseba, which has not been identified, but which may be the present Kh. Abu esh Sheba in the immediate neighbourhood of Kefr Anân.

[1] Hosea xiv. 5.

[2] Psalm lxxxix. 12. How far they believed its influence to travel may be seen from that other psalm: '*The dew of Hermon that cometh down on the mountains of Zion*' (Psalm cxxxiii.).

water and her immense superiority in fruitfulness to both Judæa and Samaria. This is not because Galilee has a greater rainfall—her excess in that respect is slight,[1] and during the dry season showers are almost as unknown as in the rest of Palestine. But the moisture, seen and unseen, which the westerly winds lavish on the Lebanons, are stored by them for Galilee's sake, and dispensed to her with unfailing regularity all round the year. They break out in the full-born rivers of the Upper Jordan Valley, and in the wealth of wells among her hills. When Judæa is dry they feed the streams of Gennesaret and Esdraelon. In winter the springs of Kishon burst so richly from the ground, that the Great Plain about Tabor is a quagmire; even in summer there are fountains in Esdraelon, round which the thickets keep green; and in the glens running up to Lower Galilee the paths cross rivulets and sometimes wind round a marsh. In the long cross valleys, winter lakes last till July,[2] and farther north the autumn streams descend both watersheds with a music unheard in Southern Palestine. In fact, the difference in this respect between Galilee and Judæa is just the difference between their names—the one liquid and musical like her running waters, the other dry and dead like the fall of your horse's hoof on her blistered and muffled rock.

Water.

So much water means an exuberant fertility. We have seen what Esdraelon is, and we may leave for separate treatment the almost tropic regions of the Jordan

[1] The figures are few for Nazareth (we owe them to Dr. Vartan). Comparing them with those for Jerusalem by Dr. Chaplin, Anderlind makes out a difference of 4·16 centimetres in the annual rainfall; Jerusalem, 57·01; Nazareth, 61·17. Jerusalem is 2300 feet above the sea, Nazareth, about 1000.

[2] So the Plain of Buttauf was in that month still partly a lake.—Conder's *Tent Work*.

Valley. But take Lower and Upper Galilee, with their more temperate climate. They are almost as well wooded as our own land. Tabor is covered with bush, and on its northern side with large, loose groves of forest trees. The road which goes up from the Bay of Carmel to Nazareth winds, as among English glades, with open woods of oak and an abundance of flowers and grass. Often, indeed, as about Nazareth, the limestone breaks out not less bare and dusty than in Judæa itself, but over the most of Lower Galilee there is a profusion of bush, with scattered forest trees—holly-oak, maple, sycomore, bay-tree, myrtle, arbutus, sumac and others—and in the valleys olive orchards and stretches of fat corn-land. Except for some trees like the sycomore, Upper Galilee is quite as rich. It is 'an undulating table-land, arable, and everywhere tilled, with swelling hills in view all round, covered with shrubs and trees.'[1] Above Tyre there is a great plateau, sloping westwards. It is 'all cultivated, and thronged with villages.' To the south of the Wady el Ma the country is more rugged, and cultivation is now pursued only in patches;[2] yet even here are vines and olives. Round Jotapata Josephus speaks of timber being cut down for the town's defence.[3] Gischala was Gush-halab, 'fat soil,'[4] and was noted for its oil. Throughout the province olives were so abundant that a proverb ran, 'It is easier to raise a legion of olives in Galilee than to bring up a child in Palestine.'[5] Even on the high water-

Fertility.

[1] Robinson, *L.R.* See also *P.E.F. Mem. Survey*, iii.

[2] *P.E.F. Mem.* iii., Galilee.

[3] iii. *Wars*, vii. 8; cf. vi. 2.

[4] Neubauer, *Géog. du Talmud.*

[5] *Talmud*, quoted by Neubauer, p. 180. The abundance of oil in Galilee is well illustrated in the use made of boiling oil by the defenders of Jotapata, who poured great quantities of it on the Roman soldiers (iii. *Wars*, vii. 28).

parting between Huleh and the Mediterranean, the fields are fertile, while the ridges are covered with forests of small oaks. To the inhabitants of such a land, the more luxuriant vegetation of the hot plains on either side spreads its temptations in vain.

> '*Asher, his bread is fat,*
> *And he yieldeth the dainties of a king.*
> *Blessed be Asher above children,*
> *And let him dip his foot in oil!*
> *O Naphtali, satisfied with favour,*
> *And full of the blessing of Jehovah.*'[1]

But it is luxury where luxury cannot soften. On these broad heights, open to the sunshine and the breeze, life is free and exhilarating.

> '*Naphtali is as a hind let loose.*'[2]

This beautiful figure fully expresses the feelings which are bred by the health, the spaciousness, the high freedom and glorious outlook of Upper Galilee.

To so generous a land the inhabitants, during that part of her history which concerns us, responded with energy.

Culture and Population.

'Their soil,' says Josephus, 'is universally rich and fruitful, and full of the plantations of trees of all sorts, insomuch that it invites, by its fruitfulness, the most slothful to take pains in its cultivation. Accordingly it is all cultivated by its inhabitants, and no part of it lies

[1] Gen. xlix. 20; Deut. xxxiii. 23, 24.

[2] Gen. xlix. 21. Another reading, partly suggested by the LXX., is adopted by Ewald, Dillmann, and others, *Naphtali is a slender terebinth giving forth goodly boughs.* Other ancient versions, however, support the Massoretic text; and while, as we have seen, the figure of a tree is not inapplicable to the mountains of Naphtali, that of a slender tree is quite absurd. The ordinary reading is, as shown above, beautifully suited to a people in the position of Naphtali.

idle.'[1] The villages were frequent, there were many fortified towns, and the population was very numerous. We may not accept all that Josephus reports in these respects —he reckons a population of nearly three millions—but there are good reasons for the possibility of his high figures;[2] and in any case the province was very thickly peopled. Save in the recorded hours of our Lord's praying, the history of Galilee has no intervals of silence and loneliness; the noise of a close and busy life is always audible; and to every crisis in the Gospels and in Josephus we see crowds immediately swarm.

Volcanic elements.

One other national feature of Galilee must not be passed over. The massive limestone of her range is broken here and there by volcanic extrusions—an extinct crater, for instance, near Gischala,[3] dykes of basalt, and scatterings of lava upon the plateau above the lake. Hot sulphur springs flow by Tiberias, and the whole province has been shaken by terrible earthquakes.[4] The nature of the people was also volcanic. Josephus describes them as 'ever fond of innovations, and by nature disposed to changes, and delighting in seditions.'[5] They had an ill name for quarrelling. From among them came the chief zealots and wildest fanatics of the Roman wars.[6] We remember two Galileans

The Galilean temper.

[1] iii. *Wars*, iii. 2.

[2] See those given by Dr. Selah Merrill in his valuable monograph on *Galilee in the Time of Christ*. 'Bypaths of Bible Knowledge' Series, London, 1891.

[3] Sahel-el-Jish.

[4] The most recent was that in 1837, which overthrew the walls of Tiberias, and killed so large a number of the population of Safed and other towns.

[5] *Life*, xvii.; xvii. *Antt.* x. 5; xx. *id.* vi. 1; i. *Wars*, xvi. 5; ii. *id.* xvii. 8; Tacitus, *Ann.* xii. 54.

[6] Judas, the Galilean from Gamala, in Jaulân, A.D. 6 (xviii. *Antt.* i. 1; ii. *Wars*, viii. 1). His sons, James and Simon, were executed by Tiberius Alex

who wished to call down fire from heaven on those who were only discourteous to them.[1] Yet this inner fire is an essential of manhood. It burns the meanness out of men, and can flash forth in great passions for righteousness. From first to last, the Galileans were a chivalrous and a gallant race.

> '*Zebulun was a people jeoparding their life to the death,*
> *And Naphtali on the high places of the field.*'[2]

With the same desperate zeal, their sons attempted the forlorn hope of breaking the Roman power. 'The country,' says Josephus proudly, 'hath never been destitute of men of courage.'[3] Their fidelity, often unreasoning and ill-tempered, was always sincere. 'The Galileans,' according to the Talmud, 'were more anxious for honour than for money; the contrary was true of Judæa.'[4] For this cause also our Lord chose His friends from the people; and it was *not* a Galilean who betrayed Him.

Political Geography of Galilee.

When we turn from the physical characteristics of this province of the subterranean fires and waters to her political geography, we find influences as bold and inspiring as those we have noted. We may select three as the chief—the neighbourhood of classic scenes of Hebrew history; the great world-roads which crossed Galilee; the surrounding heathen civilisations.

ander (xx. *Antt.* v. 2); his grandson, Manahem, was prominent in the revolt of 66 (ii. *Wars*, xvii. 8, 9), and a descendant, Eleazar, was captain of the Sicarii, and so led the defence of Masada in 73 (ii. *Wars*, xvii. 9; vii. *ib.* viii. 1). Cf. Schürer, *Hist.* Div. I. vol. I. p. 81, n. 129. John of Gischala, a very passionate patriot (Josephus, *Life*, x., xiii., etc.; ii. *Wars*, xxi. 1, 2, etc.). Cf. *the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices* (Luke xiii. 1).

[1] Luke ix. 54. Cf. Jos. xx. *Antt.* vi. 1.

[2] Judges v. 18.

[3] iii. *Wars*, iii. 2.

[4] Quoted by Neubauer, *Géog. du Talm.* 181.

I. It is often taken for granted that the Galilee of our Lord's day was a new land with an illegitimate people—without history, without traditions, without prophetic succession. The notion is inspired by such proverbs as, *Search and see, for out of Galilee cometh no prophet. Can any good come out of Nazareth?* But these utterances were due to the spitfire pride of Judæa, that had contempt for the coarse dialect of the Galileans,[1] and for their intercourse with the heathen. The province, it is true, had been under the Law for only a little more than a century.[2] Her customs and laws, even on such important matters as marriage and intercourse with the heathen, her coins and weights, her dialect, were all sufficiently different from those of Judæa to excite popular sentiment in the latter, and provide the scribes with some quotable reasons for their hostility. Do we desire a modern analogy for the difference between Judæa and Galilee in the time of our Lord, we shall find one in the differences between England and Scotland soon after the Union. But then Galilee had as much reason to resent the scorn of Judæa as Scotland the haughty tolerance of England. Behind the Exile, Galilee had traditions, a prophetic succession, and a history almost as splendid as Judah's own. She was not out of the way of the great scenes of famous days. Carmel, Kishon, Megiddo, Jezreel, Gilboa, Shunem, Tabor, Gilead, Bashan, the waters of Merom, Hazor and Kadesh, were all within touch or sight. She shared with Judæa even the exploits of the Maccabees. By Gennesaret was Jonathan's march, by Merom the scene of his heroic rally, when his forces were in flight, and of his great victory ; on the other side,

I. Galilee—Holy Land.

[1] The Galileans confounded the gutturals. [2] See p. 414.

at Ptolemais, was his treacherous capture, the beginning of his martyrdom.[1] Galilee, therefore, lived as openly as Judæa in face of the glories of their people. Her latent fires had everywhere visible provocation. The foot of the invader could tread no league of her soil without starting the voices of fathers who had laboured and fought for her —without rewaking promises which the greatest prophets had lavished upon her future. *As in the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun, and the land of Naphtali, so in the latter time hath he made them glorious, the way of the sea, across Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles. The people which walked in darkness have seen a great light; dwellers in the land of darkness, on them hath the light shined.*

It is not necessary to enlarge upon the preparation which all this must have effected for the ministry of our Lord. That the Messianic tempers were stronger in Galilean than in any other Jewish hearts is most certain.[2] While Judæa's religion had for its characteristic zeal for the law, Galilee's was distinguished by the nobler, the more potential passion of hope. Therefore it was to Galilee that Jesus came preaching that *the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand*; it was the Galilean patriotism which He chose to refine to diviner issues.

But we usually overlook that Galilee was vindicated also in the affections of the Jews themselves. It is one of the most singular revolutions, even in Jewish history, that the province, which through so many centuries Judæa had contemned as profane and heretical,

The Jewish Renascence.

[1] 1 Macc. ix., xi., xii.

[2] See p. 421 f., on the number of Galilean leaders in the revolt against Rome.

should succeed Judæa as the sanctuary of the race and the home of their theological schools—that to-day Galilee should have as many holy places as Judæa, and Safed and Tiberias be reverenced along with Hebron and Jerusalem. The transference can be traced geographically, by the movements of the Sanhedrim. After the defeat of the last Jewish revolt at Bettir (134 A.D.), the Sanhedrim migrated north from Jabneh in the Philistine plain to Oshah just north of Carmel, and thence gradually eastward across Lower Galilee to Shaphram, to Beth She'arim, to Sepphoris—nay, to the unclean and cursed Tiberias itself. Here the last Sanhedrim sat, and the Mishna was edited. You see the tomb of Maimonides in Tiberias, and most of the towns of Lower and some of those of Upper Galilee have a name as the scenes of the residence or of the martyrdom of famous Rabbis. It is curious to observe in the Talmuds the reflection of a state of society in Galilee of the third century more strict in many respects than that of Judæa. But, in the history of Israel, the last is ever becoming the first.[1]

II. The roads of Galilee.

II. The next great features of Galilee are her Roads. This garden of the Lord is crossed by many of the world's most famous highways. We saw that Judæa was on the road to nowhere; Galilee is covered with roads to everywhere—roads from the harbours of the Phœnician coast to Samaria, Gilead, Hauran

[1] For the above details, see Neubauer, *Géog. du Talmud*, 177-233. A most valuable picture of Galilee, but it draws too much on the Talmud's picture of Galilee for illustration of the very different state of affairs in our Lord's time. The towns mentioned above will all be found on the map of the *P.E.F.* Osha is Kurbet Husheh, Shaphram Shefa 'Amr, only two miles away. Beth She'arim has not been identified.

and Damascus; roads from Sharon to the valley of the Jordan; roads from the sea to the desert; roads from Egypt to Assyria. They were not confined to Esdraelon and the Jordan Valley. They ran over Lower Galilee by its long parallel valleys, and even crossed the high plateau of Upper Galilee on the shortest direction from Tyre and Sidon to Damascus. A review of these highways will immensely enhance our appreciation of Galilee's history. They can be traced by the current lines of traffic, by the great khans or caravanserais which still exist in use or in ruin, and by the remains of Roman pavements.

Their routes.

From the earliest times to the present a great thoroughfare has connected Damascus with the sea. Its direction has varied from age to age according to political circumstances. The port of Damascus was sometimes Tripoli, sometimes Beyrout, sometimes Sidon or Tyre, sometimes Acca with Haifa. But between Damascus and the three first of these rises the double range of Lebanon; the roads have twice over to climb many thousands of feet.[1] To Tyre again the road must first compass Hermon to Banias or Hasbeya, and then cross the heights of Naphtali.[2] Acca alone is the natural port for Damascus, and the nearest ways to Acca run through Lower Galilee. Leaving Damascus, the highway

[1] The road from Damascus to Tripoli went *via* Baalbek and B'sherreh; that to Beyrout by the present diligence route; that to Sidon went from Rama, past the present Kula'at esh Shukîf, the Crusading castle of Belfort.

[2] After Banias the road traverses the Jordan Valley by Tell el Kady, passes the Hasbany branch by an old bridge; thence over the first watershed to the north of Rubb Thelathin, through the valley near Abrîkha, where there are remains of pavement, and over the second watershed by Burj Alawei to Tyre. It is commanded by two Crusading castles—Hunin, at a distance of two miles, Tibnin at more.

kept to the south of Hermon upon the level region now called Jedur,[1] and crossed the Jordan midway between the Lakes of Merom and Gennesaret at the present Bridge of the Daughters of Jacob. Thence it climbed to the Khan, now called 'of the Pit of Joseph,' and divided. One branch held west past Safed, by the line of valley between Lower and Upper Galilee, and came down by the present Wady Waziyeh upon Acca.[2] Another branch went south to the Lake of Gennesaret at Khan Minyeh—one of the possible sites for Capernaum—and there forked again. One prong bent up the Plain of Gennesaret and the present Wady Rubadiyeh to rejoin the direct western branch at Rameh. Another left the Plain of Gennesaret up the famous Wady el Hamam by Arbela[3] to the plateau above Tiberias, and thence passing the great Khan or market, now called et Tujjar, 'of the merchants,' defiled between Tabor and the Nazareth hills upon Esdraelon, which it crossed to Megiddo, on the way to Sharon, to Philistia, to Egypt. A third branch from Khan Minyeh continued due south by the Lake and Tiberias to Beth-shan, from which the traveller might either ascend Esdraelon and rejoin the straight route to Egypt, or go up through Samaria to Jerusalem, or down Jordan to Jericho. But at Bethshan, or a little to the north of it, there came across Jordan another great road from Damascus. It had traversed the level Hauran, and come down into the valley of the Jordan, by Aphek[4] or by Gamala, and it went over to the Mediterranean either by Bethshan and Esdraelon or up the Wady Fejjas to the

[1] By S'asa and el Kuneitra.

[2] Schumacher, *P.E.F.Q.*, 1889, pp. 79, 80.

[3] Modern Irbid. See 1 Macc. ix., Hosea x. 14.

[4] The present Fik, opposite Tiberias.

plateau above the Lake, and thence by the cross valley past Cana and Sepphoris to Acca. This was also the way over Galilee from Gilead and the Decapolis.[1]

The Way of the Sea.

The Great West Road from Damascus to the Mediterranean, in one or other of its branches, was the famous *Way of the Sea*. It may have been so called by Isaiah when he heard along it the grievous march of the Assyrian armies, *by way of the sea, over Jordan, Galilee of the nations.* But we cannot be certain, for the phrase is ambiguous in both its terms; we do not know whether *the sea* is Gennesaret or the Mediterranean, and whether *the way* be really a road or only a direction. If the two latter alternatives be taken, the phrase means no more than westward—a rendering suitable to the context.[2] However this be, later generations applied

[1] In Roman times there were two bridges, one just below the lake, the other the present Jisr el-Mujamia. The route—Damascus, Nawa, Beth-shan, and Esdraelon—is the line of the new Damascus Haifa railway. It crosses the Jordan just below the Lake. See Maps I. and VI.

[2] Isa. viii. 22 (Eng. version ix. 1) דֶּרֶךְ הַיָּם *The Way of the Sea.* (1) The usual interpretation is that Gennesaret is meant (יָם־כִּנֶּרֶת, Num. xxxiv. 11), and *the way of the sea*, along with the following words עֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן, *over Jordan*, is taken to mean a district to the east of the Lake of Galilee. But the tribes mentioned—Zebulun and Naphtali—had their territories to the west of Jordan; and עֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן is applicable to either side of the river. The march of the Assyrians, which is here described, swept westward. But (2) does *way* mean an actual *highway*? I am inclined to think that it means no more than direction, and that we ought to take הַיָּם, or sea, in its general sense of the West, so that the phrase in analogy to דֶּרֶךְ צָפוֹנָה (Ezek. viii. 5, xxi. 2, xl. 6) would mean simply *westward*. In that case it would be equivalent to the phrase בְּעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן יָמָּה (Josh. v. 1, etc.) *across the Jordan westwards*. It is true, however, that in these last cases the particle of *direction towards* is used; whereas in our verse *sea* is used in the genitive case with the definite article, a construction that would point to its being the title of a real road rather than the description of a direction. Yet not necessarily so, for הַיָּם (with the article) in the sense of the west also occurs, Josh. xix. 11,

Isaiah's words to the great caravan route between Damascus and the sea, and throughout the Middle Ages it was known as the 'Via Maris.' The Romans paved it, and took taxes from its traffic; at one of its tolls, in Capernaum, Matthew *sat at the receipt of custom.*[1] It was then the great route of trade with the Far East, and it continued to be so. From the eleventh to the fourteenth centuries the products of India coming from the Persian Gulf by Baghdad and Damascus were carried along it to the factories of Venice, Genoa, and Marseilles in Acca and Tyre, and thence distributed through Europe.[2] The commerce of Damascus has at present an easier way to Beyrout by the splendid Alpine road which the French engineers built across the Lebanons; but the Via Maris is still used for the considerable exports on camel-back of grain from Hauran.[3]

The Great South Road.

The Great South Road, the road for Egypt, which diverged from the Via Maris at the Lake of Galilee, was used equally for traffic and for war from the days of the patriarchs down to our own. One afternoon in 1891, while we were resting in the dale at the foot of Tabor, there passed three great droves of unladen camels. We asked the drivers, 'Where from?' 'Damascus.' 'And where are you going?' 'Jaffa and Gaza; but, if we do not get the camels sold there, we shall drive

Ezek. xlii. 19. But if a definite sea be meant, then it is more probable that the Mediterranean—the goal of the road—would give its name to the latter, than that the Lake of Gennesaret, along which only one of the road's branches passed, would do so.

[1] Mark ii. 14.

[2] Rey, *Les Colonies Franques de Syrie au xiieme et xiiieme siècles*, ch. iii., *Les Communes Commerciales*, and ch. ix. *La Commerce.* Heyd, *Die Italienischen Handels-colonien in Palästina.* See above, p. 18.

[3] In harvest the passage of camels across the Jisr-Benat-Jakoob never ceases.

them down to Egypt.' How ancient a succession these men were following! From Abraham's time, every year that war was not afoot, camels have passed by this road to Egypt. Armies sometimes marched along it, as, for instance, the Syrians when Jonathan Maccabeus went out against them in the defiles by Arbela above Gennesaret.[1] But the open road by Hauran and across the Jordan below the Lake seems to have been the more usual line of invasion. So the Syrians came in Ahab's time,[2] and probably also the Assyrians when they advanced by Damascus.

The Great Road of the East (as we may call it) from Acre across Lower Galilee to Bethshan, and over the Jordan into Gilead, was the road for Arabia. Up it have come through all ages the Midianites, the children of the East. In the Roman period it connected the Asian frontier of the Empire with the capital. Chariots, military troops, companies of officials and merchants, passed by this road, between the Greek cities east of Jordan, and Ptolemais, the port for Rome.

The Great East Road.

Of all things in Galilee it was the sight of these immemorial roads which taught and moved me most—not because they were trodden by the patriarchs, and some of them must soon shake to the railway train, not because the chariots of Assyria and Rome have both rolled along them—but because it was up and down these roads that the immortal figures of the Parables passed. By them came the merchantman seeking goodly pearls, the king departing to receive his kingdom, the friend on a journey, the householder arriving

These roads and the Parables of Jesus.

[1] 1 Macc. ix. 2. So also came some of Saladin's army, in 1187, to the Battle of Hattîn.

[2] 1 Kings xx., xxii.

suddenly upon his servants, the prodigal son coming back from the far-off country. The far-off country! What a meaning has this frequent phrase of Christ's, when you stand in Galilee by one of her great roads—roads which so easily carried willing feet from the pious homes of Asher and Naphtali to the harlot cities of Phœnicia—roads which were in touch with Rome and with Babylon.

III. The Environment of Galilee.

III. Her roads carry us out upon the surroundings of Galilee. In the neighbourhood of Judæa we have seen great deserts, some of which come up almost to the gates of the cities, and have impressed their austerity and foreboding of judgment upon the feelings and the literature of the people. The very different temperament of the Galilean was explained in part by his very different environment. The desert is nowhere even visible from Galilee. Instead of it, the Galilee of our Lord's time had for neighbours the half Greek land of Phœnicia, with its mines and manufactures, its open ports, its traffic from the West; the fertile Hauran,[1] with its frequent cities, where the Greek language was spoken, and the pagan people worshipped their old divinities under the names of the Greek gods; and Gilead, with the Decapolis, ten cities (more or less) of stately forums, amphitheatres, and temples.[2] We shall feel the full influence of all this upon Galilee when we go down to the Lake. Meantime let us remember that Galilee was not surrounded by *desert places* haunted by demoniacs, which is all that the few traces in the Gospels suggest to our imagination; but that the background and environment of this stage of our Lord's ministry was thronged and

[1] The ancient Auranitis. See ch. xxix.

[2] See ch. xxviii.

very gay—that it was Greek in all that the name can bring up to us of busy life, imposing art and sensuous religion. The effect upon the Galilean temperament is obvious.

These then are the influences which geography reveals bearing upon Galilee. Before we go down to the Lake, let us focus them upon the one town away from the Lake, which is of supreme interest to us—Nazareth.[1]

Nazareth.

Nazareth is usually represented as a secluded and an obscure village. Many writers on the life of our Lord have emphasised this, holding it proved by the silence of the Gospels concerning His childhood and youth. But the value of a vision of the Holy Land is that it fills the silences of the Holy Book, and from it we receive a very different idea of the early life of our Lord from the one generally current among us.[2]

The position of Nazareth is familiar to all. The village lies on the most southern of the ranges of Lower Galilee, and on the edge of this just above the Plain of Esdraelon.

[1] On Nazareth, see Guérin's *Galilee*; Merrill, *op. cit.*; Conder's *Tent Work*, ch. v.; Schumacher, *Dasjetzige Nazareth*, *Z.D.P.V.* xiii. 234. The population is now 7500. Some travellers have found them turbulent. Schumacher calls them pleasant and hospitable. They form a 'Sprachinsel in gewissem Sinne;' for while the surrounding towns either pronounce *q* (*ḳ*) fully or miss it, the Nazareth people pronounce it as *k*: *u* they pronounce *ü*, as in Turkish. There is a want of water, the well of Mary being the only well. There is a market for the neighbourhood.

[2] It is a great merit of Dr. Merrill's monograph on Galilee, that it has disproved this error in detail. See also a very striking passage on Galilee in Mr. Walter Besant's Lecture on the Work of the Pal. Expl. Fund, in *The City and the Land*, 114 f.: 'Palestine was not an obscure country . . . He who wandered among the hills and valley of Galilee was never far from some great and populous city . . . It was not as a rustic preaching to rustics that our Lord went about . . . He went forth in a part [of the Roman Empire] full of Roman civilisation, busy and populous, where, at every turn, He would meet with something to mark the empire to which He belonged.'

You cannot see from Nazareth the surrounding country, for Nazareth rests in a basin among hills; but the moment you climb to the edge of this basin, which is everywhere within the limit of the village boys' playground, what a view you have! Esdraelon lies before you, with its twenty battle-fields—the scenes of Barak's and of Gideon's victories, the scenes of Saul's and Josiah's defeats, the scenes of the struggles for freedom in the glorious days of the Maccabees. There is Naboth's vineyard and the place of Jehu's revenge upon Jezebel; there Shunem and the house of Elisha; there Carmel and the place of Elijah's sacrifice. To the east the Valley of Jordan, with the long range of Gilead; to the west the radiance of the Great Sea, with the ships of Tarshish and the promise of the Isles. You see thirty miles in three directions. It is a map of Old Testament history.

The boyhood of Jesus.

But equally full and rich was the present life on which the eyes of the boy Jesus looked out. Across Esdraelon, opposite to Nazareth, there emerged from the Samarian hills the road from Jerusalem, thronged annually with pilgrims, and the road from Egypt with its merchants going up and down. The Midianite caravans could be watched for miles coming up from the fords of Jordan; and, as we have seen, the caravans from Damascus wound round the foot of the hill on which Nazareth stands. Or if the village boys climbed the northern edge of their hollow home, there was another road within sight, where the companies were still more brilliant—the highway between Acre and the Decapolis, along which legions marched, and princes swept with their retinues, and all sorts of travellers from all countries went to and fro. The Roman ranks, the Roman

eagles, the wealth of noblemen's litters and equipages cannot have been strange to the eyes of the boys of Nazareth, especially after their twelfth year, when they went up to Jerusalem, or visited with their fathers famous Rabbis, who came down from Jerusalem, peripatetic among the provinces. Nor can it have been the eye only which was stirred. For all the rumour of the Empire entered Palestine close to Nazareth—the news from Rome, about the Emperor's health,[1] about the changing influence of the great statesmen, about the prospects at court of Herod, or of the Jews; about Cæsar's last order concerning the tribute, or whether the policy of the Procurator would be sustained. Many Galilean families must have had relatives in Rome; Jews would come back to this countryside to tell of the life of the world's capital. Moreover, the scandals of the Herods buzzed up and down these roads; pedlars carried them, and the peripatetic Rabbis would moralise upon them. The customs, too, of the neighbouring Gentiles—their loose living, their sensuous worship, their absorption in business,[2] the hopelessness of the inscriptions on their tombs, multitudes of which were readable (as some are still) on the roads round Galilee—all this would furnish endless talk in Nazareth, both among men and boys.

Here, then, He grew up and suffered temptation, Who was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. The perfection of His purity and patience was achieved not easily as behind a wide fence which shut the world out, but amid rumour and scandal with every provocation to unlawful curiosity and premature ambition. The pres-

[1] As in the days when Vespasian was encamped in Galilee. See both Josephus and Tacitus on this.

[2] Matt. vi. 32.

sure and problems of the world outside God's people must have been felt by the youth of Nazareth as by few others ; yet the scenes of prophetic missions to it—Elijah's and Elisha's—were also within sight.[1] A vision of all the kingdoms of the world was as possible from this village as from the mount of temptation. But the chief lesson which Nazareth teaches to us is the possibility of a pure home and a spotless youth in the very face of the evil world.

[1] Luke iv. 25 ff.



CHAPTER XXI

THE LAKE OF GALILEE



For this Chapter consult Maps I., III. and VI

THE LAKE OF GALILEE

IN last chapter the dominant features of Galilee were shown to be seven. First, a close dependence on Lebanon. Second, an abundance of water, which Lebanon lavishes on her by rain, mists, wells, and full-born streams. Third, a great fertility: profusion of flowers, corn, oil and wood. Fourth, volcanic elements: extinct craters, dykes of basalt, hot springs, liability to earthquakes. Fifth, great roads: highways of the world cross Galilee in all directions—from the Levant to Damascus and the East, from Jerusalem to Antioch, from the Nile to the Euphrates. Sixth, in result of the fertility and of the roads, busy industries and commerce, with a crowded population. And seventh, the absence of a neighbouring desert, such as infects Judæa with austerity, but in its place a number of heathen provinces, pouring upon Galilee the full influence of their Greek life.

The seven features of Galilee.

Now all these seven features of Galilee in general were concentrated upon her lake and its coasts. The Lake of Galilee was the focus of the whole province. Imagine that wealth of water, that fertility, those nerves and veins of the volcano, those great highways, that numerous population, that commerce and industry, those strong Greek influences—imagine them all crowded

The Lake the focus.

into a deep valley, under an almost tropical heat, and round a great blue lake, and you have before you the conditions in which Christianity arose and Christ Himself chiefly laboured.

We do not realise that the greater part of our Lord's ministry was accomplished at what may be truly called the bottom of a trench, 680 feet below the level of the sea. As you go down into it by the road which our Lord Himself traversed between Nazareth and Capernaum, there come up to meet you some signals of its wonderful peculiarity. By two broad moors,[1] the grey limestone land falls from the ranges of Lower Galilee to a line of cliffs overlooking the lake, and about 300 feet above it. These terraced moors are broken by dykes of basalt, and strewn with lava and pumice-stone. There are hardly any trees upon them; after rain the shadeless streams soon die, and the summer grass and bush crackle to tinder. The memories of these moors match their appearance; history and legend know them only as the scenes of flight and thirst and exhaustion. Across their southern end Sisera fled headlong, and sought drink for his parched throat in the tent of Jael.[2] By the aspect of the northern end, the imagination of the early Church was provoked to fix upon it as the *desert place* where, when the day was far spent and the exhausted multitudes at some distance from their villages, our Lord brought forth a miracle to feed them.[3] And there, in Crusading times, the courage of Christendom was scorched to the heart, so as never to rally in all the East again. Where the heights of Hattîn offer neither

The way down.

[1] Now the plateau of Sha'ara and the Sahel el-Ahma.

[2] See p. 395.

[3] Beyond the sterile aspect of the place, there is nothing to justify this tradition.

shade nor springs, the Crusaders, tempted, it is said, by some treachery, came forth to meet Saladin. A hot July night without water was followed by a burning day,[1] to add to the horrors of which the enemy set fire to the scrub. The smoke swept the fevered Christians into a panic; knights choked in their hot armour; the blinded foot-soldiers, breaking their ranks and dropping their weapons, were ridden down in mobs by the Moslem cavalry; and though here and there groups of brave men fought sun and fire and sword far on into the terrible afternoon, the defeat was utter. A militant and truculent Christianity, as false as the relics of the 'True Cross' round which it was rallied, met its judicial end within view of the scenes where Christ proclaimed the Gospel of Peace, and went about doing good.

The Battle of Hattin—1187 A.D.

Through such memories, enforcing the effect of the arid landscape, you descend from the hills of Galilee to her lake. You feel you are passing from the climate and scenery of Southern Europe to the climate and scenery of the barer tropics. The sea-winds, which freshen all Galilee and high Hauran beyond, blow over this basin, and the sun beats into it with unmitigated ardour.[2] The atmosphere, for the most part, hangs still and heavy, but the cold currents, as they pass from the west, are sucked down in vortices of air, or

Atmosphere of the Lake Basin.

[1] 5th July 1187. The battle is described from the Crusading side by Bernard the Treasurer; from the Saracen by Boha-ed-Din (*Life of Saladin*, ch. xxxv.). Robinson, *B.R.* iii. 245-249, gives an admirable summary of these accounts.

[2] Detailed statistics of the meteorology of the Lake of Galilee are unknown to me. For scattered notes of the temperature, winds and storms, see Robinson, *B.R.* iii.; Merrill, *East of Jordan*; Frei, *Z.D.P.V.* ix. 100 f; Tristram's various writings; Macgregor, *Rob Roy on the Jordan*, etc. See below, p. 449 f.

by the narrow gorges that break upon the lake. Then arise those sudden storms for which the region is notorious—

> 'The wind, the tempest roaring high,
> The tumult of a tropic sky.'

In such conditions a large population and all industry would have been as impossible as at the other end of the Jordan, but for two redeeming features—the lake itself and the wealth of fountains and streams which feed it from Lebanon. In that torrid basin, approached through such sterile surroundings, the lake feeds every sense of the body with life. Sweet water,[1] full of fish,[2] a surface of sparkling blue, tempting down breezes from above, bringing forth breezes of her own, the Lake of Galilee is at once food, drink and air, a rest to the eye, coolness in the heat, an escape from the crowd,[3] and a facility of travel very welcome in so exhausting a climate. Even those who do not share her memories of Christ feel enthusiasm for her. The Rabbis said: 'Jehovah hath created seven seas, but the Sea of Gennesaret is His delight.'

The functions of the Lake.

The lake lies, in shape, like a harp, with the bulge to the north-west. It is nearly thirteen miles long,[4] and its greatest breadth is eight.[5] The wider northern end is the

[1] Some travellers have found in the water 'a slight brackish taste' (so Robinson's companions, but not Robinson himself, *B.R.* iii. 261). But this approaches unpleasantness only in the shallow waters near the larger saline springs. Elsewhere the words of Josephus, iii. *Wars*, x. 7, are not exaggerated, *γλυκειά τε ὅμως ἐστὶ καὶ ποτιμωτάτη*.

[2] See p. 462.

[3] Mark vi. 32, etc.

[4] On the large Survey Map, from the influx of Jordan to the village of Semakh.

[5] The greatest depth is 250 metres at the northern end. Lortet, *Dragages exécutées dans le Lac de Tibériade en Mai*, 1880; *Comptes Rendus Hebdom.* des séances de l'Académie des Sciences, Tome xci., Paris, 1880, pp. 500-502

more open. The Jordan, escaped from a long gorge, enters quietly through a delta of his own deposits. To the west of this delta is thorny, thistly moorland, sloping northwards to a height which leaves over it only Hermon visible, though the basin of Merom lies between. North-west this moorland steepens, rising to the bulk of the hills about Safed, and then, as the coast of the lake trends more rapidly southwards, it drops upon the level Ghuweir—or 'little Ghôr'—almost certainly the *land of Gennesaret*, which is four miles broad.[1] South of the Ghuweir the hills close in upon the lake, with a valley breaking through them from the plateau above. South of this valley they leave but a ribbon of coast, along part of which Tiberias lies, commanded by its black castle. In contrast to the green open slopes of the north, these dark, imprisoning cliffs, with their black *débris*,

The shape of the Lake Basin.

Lortet thinks that the Lake of Galilee was once connected with the Mediterranean. But this has been disproved by Hull. See p. 470. On the peculiar fishes of the lake, see Tristram, and Merrill, *East of the Jordan*, p. 441.

[1] Gennesaret Γεννησαρέτ, the Land of Gennesaret, Matt. xiv. 34; Mark vi. 53, Lake of Gennesaret, Luke v. 1. The earliest use of the name is in 1 Macc. xi. 67, Τὸ ὕδωρ Γεννησάρ (in the same verse, for Νασωρ read Ἀσωρ = Hazor, cf. Josephus, xiii. *Antt.* v. 7). Josephus gives Γεννησάρ, Γ. λίμνη, or ὕδωρ and ἡ Γεννησαρῖτις. The later Hebrew (Targums and Talmud) give גניסר, גנוסר, and גינוסר. The Targums identify the name with the Chinnereth of the Old Testament (כִּנֶּרֶת, Deut. iii. 17; כִּנֶּרֶת, Josh. xix. 35; כִּנְרוֹת, Josh. xi. 2; כָּל-כִּנְּרֹת, 1 Kings xv. 20), which is applied both to the lake and a town on the lake, while in the last passage it perhaps covers the whole of the northern Jordan Valley. Scholars have accepted this identification (Dillmann on Josh. xix. 35; the *P.E.F. Map*, Ed. 1891, etc.), but it is improbable. The LXX. transliterate כנרת by χενερεθ and χενερωθ. Even this can scarcely have been Γεννησαρ, גניסר, or גינוסר. The latter form points rather to a compound of גיא or גן. Chinnereth has been derived from כנור, 'harp,' as if through the shape of the lake. *Talm. Bab. Meg.* 6*a*: 'Chinnereth, *i.e.* Genesar, and wherefore is it called Chinnereth? Because its fruit is sweet like the artichoke, ככינרא' (not as Neub., *Géog. du Talm.* 215, 'sweet as voice of a harp').

impose upon this part of the coast a sombre and sinister aspect, not unsuited for its association with the name of the gloomy tyrant, that, by a strange irony of fate, has been stamped on a landscape from which the name of Jesus has altogether vanished.[1] As the south end of the lake approaches, the ribbon of coast widens, and the Jordan cuts through it, striking at first due west, and then south by the foot of the hills. Four miles broad, the Jordan Valley leaves a wide prospect from the lake southward, that is closed only by the cliffs of the gorge to which it narrows twenty miles away. From the east the Yarmuk Valley breaks in just below the lake, distending the Ghôr to the dimensions of a great plain; and to the south of the Yarmuk rise the heights of Gadara, commanding this plain, and looking up the lake to Tiberias and the north end. From the Yarmuk northwards up all the eastern side of the lake runs a wall of hills, the edge of the plateau of Jaulân[2] or Gaulanitis. This is a limestone plateau, but topped by a vast layer of basalt. You see the curious formation as you ascend the gorges which lead upwards from the lake, for first you pass the dirty white lime strata, and then the hard black rocks of the volcanic deposit. Some of the gorges—like that of Fik, opposite Tiberias, where Hippos stood—are open and gradual enough to have been easily used as high-roads in all ages; but others farther north are wild and impassable.[3] The wall which

[1] Lamartine (*Pilgrimage to the Holy Land*, Eng. Ed. i. 269) speaks of 'avalanches of black stones,' the 'black, naked hill,' 'the sombre and funereal character of the landscape about Tiberias.'

[2] The Hebrew גּוֹלָן, or Gôlan, is in classic Arabic pronounced Gaulân, but with the natives of the district it has shortened to the same first syllable as in Hebrew, though, of course, with soft *g*—*gô*, or *jô*. See Schumacher's *The Jaulan*.

[3] Like the Wady Jeramaya described in Schumacher's *The Jaulan*, 253.

the plateau presents to the lake is higher and more constant than the hills down the western side, but it does not come so close to the beach. Except at Khersa, the eastern coast is about half a mile broad, well watered and fertile.

The view which the whole basin presents has been likened to one of our Scottish lochs. This would need to be one of the least wooded. Few lochs in Scotland have surroundings so stripped of trees as those of the Lake of Galilee are to-day. Except for some palms lingering in Gennesaret, a scattering of thorn bushes all round the coast, brakes of oleander on the eastern shores, and small oaks up the gorges to the Jaulan plateau, trees are not to be seen. The mountain edges are bare, and so are the grey slopes to the north, lifted towards Hermon as a Scottish moor to a snowy Ben. Only one town is visible, Tiberias, now a poor fevered place of less than 5000 inhabitants; besides this there are not more than three or four small villages round all the coast. There are no farmsteads,[1] or crofts, such as break the solitude of our most desolate Highland lochs. The lights which come out at night on shore and hill are the camp-fires of wandering Arabs. It is well known, too, how seldom a sail is seen on the surface of the Lake.

The aspect to-day.

How very different it was in the days when Jesus came down from Nazareth to find His home and His disciples upon these shores! Where there are now no trees there were great woods; where there are marshes, there were noble gardens; where there is but a boat or two, there were fleets of sails; where there is one town, there were

[1] Except those of the new German colony near 'Ain et Tabghah, whose red roofs indicate their western builders.

nine or ten. We know this from Josephus, who fully describes the province he governed and fought over only thirty-four years after our Lord's ministry—too short a time for the country to have changed.

The Lake in our Lord's time.

The Plain of Gennesaret had 'soil so fruitful, that all sorts of trees would grow upon it, for the temper of the air is so well blended, that it suits those many sorts, especially walnuts, which require the colder air' (that is relatively to the rest), 'and flourish there in great plenty. There are palm trees also, which grow best in hot air; fig trees also and olives grow near them, which require an air more temperate.' This conjunction was due to the steep slope of the Galilean hills, which fall from as high as 4000 feet above the sea, north of Safed, to 680 below at Gennesaret. In the days of the pride of the land, what a plunge through nature it must have been, when one came down from oaks, through olives, sycomores and walnuts, to palms that had their roots washed by the Lake. 'One may call this place the ambition of Nature, where it forces those plants that are naturally enemies to one another to agree together: it is a happy contention of the seasons, as if each of them laid claim to this country, for it not only nourishes different sorts of autumnal fruits beyond men's expectation, but preserves them a great while. It supplies men with the principal fruits—grapes and figs continually during ten months of the year, and the rest of the fruits, as they ripen together through the whole year.'[1] Even now one sees proof of that luxuriance in the few rich patches of garden upon Gennesaret, in the wealth of flowers on the surrounding slopes, and in the glory of maidenhair fern

[1] Josephus, iii. *Wars*, x. 8.

that springs up wherever there is a stream to give it water and a ruin to give it shade.[1] About Tiberias, the land was probably as bare as now, but from the foot of the Lake to Bethshan was cultivated for wheat, and the incoming valley from Tabor[2] still holds oleanders deep enough to cover a regiment of horse. The eastern plateau, bare to-day, was certainly well wooded down even to a recent time, for the place-names imply the presence of forest and copse,[3] while some of the wadies by which you descend to the Lake, have large oaks, terebinths, planes and carobs, and others are full of bush and brake.[4]

The cities round the Lake.

There were nine cities round the Lake, each said to have had not less than 15,000 inhabitants, and some probably with more. Of these the sites of Tiberias and Magdala on the western shore, and of Gadara and Hippos on the eastern hills are certain. Bethsaida and Capernaum were at the north end, though where exactly, who can tell? Taricheæ is still a matter of controversy, and so is Chorazin. But this we do know, that whatever be the sites to which these names were originally attached, their towns formed round the now bare Lake an almost unbroken ring of building.

Tiberias is said to occupy the site or neighbourhood of Raḳḳath, an ancient town of Naphtali,[5] and as Raḳḳath

[1] The gardens about Irbid, on the plateau above the Lake, are beautiful. On the Wady el Hamam, which, true to its name, shelters numberless wild blue-grey doves, see Schumacher, *Z.D.P.V.* xiii. 67.

[2] Wady Fejjas.

[3] Schumacher, *The Jaulan*, 15, 17, 22, 23.

[4] There were thick woods round the Lake even in Arculf's time, A.D. 700.

[5] *Talm. Jer. Meg.* 2*b*. But *Talm. Bab. Meg.* 6*a* gives other identifications. When the foundations were being laid, quantities of human bones were discovered. The site, therefore, cannot have exactly coincided with that of an old town, but may have covered the cemetery adjoining this. Neubauer (*Géog. du Talm.* 209) quotes from *Tal. Bab. Sanh.* 12 a proof that in the fourth century Tiberias was called Raḳḳath.

probably means *strip*, or *coast*, this may be. The Herods did not raise their artificial cities from virgin sites, but generally rebuilt some old town. Why Herod chose this site is very clear. There would have been great difficulty in adapting to his designs for a capital, towns so full of commerce as Taricheæ and Capernaum ; he must have preferred a site dominated by a hill, where he could build a castle, yet be near the shore, and no doubt he found an advantage, perhaps a pecuniary one, in the neighbourhood of the Baths, then famous throughout the Roman world.[1] In what year the building was begun or finished, is uncertain, but at the earliest not more than five or six years before our Lord began His ministry on the Lake.[2] Herod's plans were large. Ruins still indicate a wall three miles long.[3]

Tiberias.

[1] Cf. Pliny, *H.N.* v. 15, 'Tiberiade aquis calidis salubre.'

[2] Or from 20-22 A.D. But Lewin, *Fasti Sacri*, n. 1163, and Schürer (*Hist.* Div. II. vol. i. 144) fix on 26 A.D. on the ground that Josephus does not mention the building of Tiberias till after the accession of Pilate to the Procuratorship of Judæa (xviii. *Antt.* ii., cf. 3 with 2). This, however, is too late, for (*a*) a coin of Tiberias under the Emperor Claudius (De Saulcy, *Numis. de la Terre Sainte*, 334), is dated in the thirty-third year of the city, and Claudius died in 54 ; if this coin be really of Claudius, then it drives us back to 21 ; (*b*) two coins of Tiberias under Trajan (*Ibid.* 335) bear 80 and 81 of the city : as he began to reign in 98 they forbid us going further back than 18 A.D.; (*c*) but on a third coin under Trajan (*Ibid.* 336, No. 4, Pl. xvii.), with the date 81 of the city, the emperor is called only *Germanicus*, and not also *Dacicus*, which second title he won in 103 A.D. This gives us 22 A.D. for an upper limit. The evidence of this coin is, of course, to be preferred to that of another (whetner we read ΓΕΡΜ or ΓΕΡ. Δ) mentioned by Schürer, 145. These facts are surely stronger than the ambiguous evidence of Josephus, by which alone Schürer fixes the date as 26. The interest of the question, of course, lies in the fact that Tiberias is mentioned in no gospel but the Fourth.

[3] Schumacher's Survey in *P.E.F.Q.*, 1887, 85 ff. The walls included the citadel of Herod, but not the baths, as Furrer maintains, *Z.D.P.V.* ii. 54 Josephus' expression that the baths were ἐν Τιβεριάδι, *Life*, 16 ; ii. *Wars* xxi. 6, must therefore be interpreted, as Schürer says, 'in the district of Tiberias.' According to xviii. *Antt.* ii. 3 ; iv. *Wars*, i. 3, the baths were outside the city, 'Εμμαοῦς or 'Αμμαοῦς = חמתה.

Besides the imposing citadel there were a palace, a forum, and a great synagogue.[1] But the buildings were the best of the town. No true Jew would set foot on a site defiled at once by the bones which had been uncovered in digging the foundations, and by the great heathen images which stared down from the castle walls. Failing to get respectable citizens, Herod swept into his city the scum of the land. *Non abfuerat omen*: he had already called it after Tiberius.

These things—that the city was so new, artificial and unclean—partly explain its absence from the records of Christ's ministry on the lake. Our Lord avoided the half-Greek cities, and among courtiers and officials He would have been less at home than He was among the common people of the country. But the surroundings of Tiberias, too, were repellent.[2] The city, a long strip like its predecessor, *the Ribbon*, was drawn out on the narrowest part of the coast. The line of its volcanic environment was as of rusty mourning, and the atmosphere was more confined than on the north of the lake. The fresh westerly breezes which blow throughout the summer strike the lake well out upon its surface, and leave the air inshore below the cliffs stagnant and close.[3] Tiberias is very feverish. Capernaum and Bethsaida must have been more healthy, and through them besides ran

Our Lord and Tiberias.

[1] The palace was on the Acropolis, Jos. *Life*, 12, described by Schumacher, *P.E.F.Q.* 1887, pp. 87 ff. Josephus destroyed it. The Forum was often used during Josephus' occupation of the city: *Ib.* 17, etc. The synagogue or Προσευχή was a *μέγιστον οἴκημα*, *Ib.* 54.

[2] Schürer is here quite incorrect: 'the most beautiful spot in Galilee,' *Hist.* i. ii. 19; 'a beautiful and fertile district,' *Ib.* ii. 143.

[3] The Rev. W. Ewing, late of Tiberias, informs me that this is correct Many travellers have noticed it: cf. Robinson, Macgregor, etc. Tiberias lies full in face of the hot south winds blowing up the Ghôr, cf. Frei in *Z.D.P.V.* ix. 100 f.

the greatest of the Galilean thoroughfares, the Via Maris, pouring a steady stream of busy life. Life, both physical and mental, was more in current in the cities of our Lord's choice than in that of Herod's. Nevertheless, while Bethsaida and Capernaum have passed away, Tiberias endures ; and the name of the morbid tyrant still stamps a region from which that of Jesus has vanished. The obvious reason is the black acropolis above Tiberias.[1] Capernaum, where Matthew sat at custom, depended on the great road, and faded when commerce took a new direction. But Tiberias, the only defensible site, being at once on the lake and on a hill, necessarily became the seat of the government of the province, which, in time of course, took from it its designation. That is why the name of the foreign emperor, first embalmed here in a most sordid flattery, is still buried in this obscurity and silence. But Christ went up these roads to rule the world.

The Baths of Tiberias.

The Baths of Tiberias lie a mile from the south end of the ancient city wall. Amidst all the wreckage of fortune and of name with which this coast is strewn, these springs, ministering to the changeless sorrows of humanity, have alone preserved their reputation and their name. Hammath they were in the Old Testament, Emmaus when the Greeks came, and to-day Hummâm.[2] Patients come to them from all parts of Syria, chiefly in June and July, when the neighbourhood

[1] When Saladin took Tiberias in 1187, the citadel did not yield to him till after the battle of Hattîn.

[2] There are four springs with a temperature of about 144°: 'The deposit consists chiefly of carbonate of lime with a very small proportion of muriatic salts,' quoted by Robinson, *B.R.* iii. 259, 260. Merrill, *East of Jordan*, mentions a cave filled with steam at a temperature of 86°, on the hill on which the castle stands.

is crowded. Like all medicinal baths in the East, they heal also the feuds and quarrels of the population. The peninsula on which the baths of Gadara stand is, as we shall see, considered neutral ground by rival tribes around it. So was it wont to be here. When Josephus and John of Gischala divided Galilee into rival camps, the latter, pretending sickness, requested from Josephus a safe-conduct that he might visit the baths at Emmaus, and it was granted to him.[1] It was no doubt the existence of these wells which reconciled the Jews to Tiberias, and changed that banned and cursed site into one of the four sacred cities of the Jews, with thirteen synagogues. The baths were famed across the whole ancient world. Pliny speaks of Tiberias 'calidis aquis salubris:'[2] and on a coin of Tiberias under Trajan, there is a figure of Hygeia, feeding the serpent of Aesculapius, and sitting on a rock from beneath which breaks a spring.[3] Our Lord paid no visit to this spring as He did to the pool of Bethesda, but the patients that were brought to it from all parts of Syria doubtless swelled the great numbers who were laid at his feet. There are now in Tiberias, for His sake, a physician and a hospital, who enjoy the same opportunities.[4]

Of equal importance with Tiberias was Taricheæ, for according to Pliny,[5] in his day it gave its name to the whole lake; it had a large population in 52 B.C., when we first hear of it;[6] it was a centre of industry and

[1] ii. *Wars*, xxi. 6.

[2] *H.N.* v. 15.

[3] De Saulcy, *Numis. de la Terre Sainte*, 335, Trajan, 1, 2: Plate xvii. 9.

[4] The Medical Mission of the Free Church of Scotland under Dr. Torrance.

[5] *H.N.* v. 15.

[6] xiv. *Antt.* vii. 3. Then Cassius visited it again in 43, writing to Cicero 'ex castris Taricheis,' Cic. *ad Familiares* xii. 11. The next mention of it is

commerce, and in Josephus' time a greater stronghold of Jewish patriotism than almost any other town in Galilee.

Taricheæ.

But there is a great mystery about Taricheæ. The name is neither mentioned in the Gospels nor found upon the lake to-day. Till some definite proof be discovered, the site will continue a matter of controversy, for the evidence we have is so balanced on either side that the leading authorities have changed their opinions more than once.[1] We have one certain datum,[2] that Taricheæ was thirty stadia, or three and three quarter miles from Tiberias; the question is, was it north or south of Tiberias, was it at Kerak at the issue of the Jordan from the lake, or at Mejdel on the Plain of Gennesaret? Pliny says south,[3] but his evidence as to some other towns is not correct, and we cannot depend on him here. The classic passage is the description by Josephus of Vespasian's advance from Scythopolis on

Its position.

not till nearly a century after, when Nero gave it along with Tiberias to Agrippa II. (xx. *Antt.* viii. 4; ii. *Wars*, xiii. 2).

[1] The question of the site of Taricheæ was discussed first by the officers of the English Survey: *P.E.F.Q.*, 1877, 10 ff., Wilson, originally in favour of the southern site at Kerak, here fixes on Mejdel; 121, Kitchener fixes on Kh. el Kuneitriyeh, two miles north of Tiberias; 181, Conder quotes Pliny. In 1878, p. 79, H. K. K.; 190 ff., Conder argues fully for Kerak. In Germany, Ebers and Guthe (*Pälastina* i. 317 f. 501), and Socin (*Bädeker's Guide*, 1876) favour the northern site, Mejdel. A discussion continues through the *Z.D.P.V.* viii. 95, Spiers (Mejdel); ix. 104 ff. Frei (do.); x. 120, Jakob; xi. 216 ff., van Kasteren seeks to remove the objections to Kerak from Vespasian's advance on Tiberias, by taking the latter not along the coast, but by the plateau above; xii. 145 ff., Furrer argues at length against Kerak and for a northern site, both for Taricheæ and the Emmaus of Vespasian's camp; 178, Dechent, against this second Emmaus; xiii. 140, Buhl, who answers objections to Kerak, and fixes Vespasian's camp at el Hummâm; 194, Furrer, who replies for Mejdel; 281, Guthe, who sums up in favour of Kerak, thus changing from his former position. Schürer (*Hist.* I. i. 224) also favours the southern site.

[2] Josephus, *Life*, 32.

[3] *H.N.* xv. 3.

Tiberias first and then on Taricheæ. It is argued that this proves Taricheæ to the north of Tiberias, for Vespasian could scarcely have left it on his flank while attacking the latter, nor could the fugitives from Tiberias have fled, as they are described to have done, to Kerak, for that would have been in the face of the Romans' advance up the coast. Mejdel has, therefore, been fixed upon, and as Josephus tells us that Vespasian's camp lay between Tiberias and Taricheæ at Emmaus, where there were hot springs,[1] these have been recognised in some wells two miles north of Tiberias, at the mouth of the Wady 'Amwas or 'Abu el 'Amis.[2] The advocates of Kerak maintain that Emmaus can only be the baths to the south of Tiberias, that the mention of a plain between Tiberias and Taricheæ precludes Mejdel, while they seek to turn the objections to Kerak which rise from Vespasian's advance by understanding the latter to have taken place not along the coast past Kerak, but by the plateau above. To this statement of the discussion there are only three points to be added. Kerak is not overhung with hills from which arrows could be shot into it, as Josephus describes Taricheæ to have been.[3] Josephus, on one occasion, speaks of going to Arbela from Tiberias through Taricheæ,[4] which implies that the latter lay north of Tiberias. On the other hand, the only possible echo of the name of Taricheæ in later times is found on the south of the lake.[5] The second point has been

[1] Josephus, iii. *Wars*, x. 1 : cf. iv. *Wars*, i. 3.

[2] W. 'Amwas, Frei, *Z.D.P.V.* ix. 104 ff. : W. Abu el 'Amis on the English map.

[3] ὑπώρειος, iii. *Wars*, x. 1.

[4] *Life*, 59 and 60.

[5] In the Jichus ha-Ṣadiḳim (of the end of the sixteenth century, which mentions next to the Baths of Tiberias a סראקה, that looks very like a corruption of Taricheæ). See p. 386 of Carmoly's *Itineraires de la Terre Sainte des* xiii^{e}-xvii^{e} *siècles*.—Conder's identification of Taricheæ with Takar or

mentioned, but has not received its proper emphasis: the third has been overlooked. On opposite sides, they leave the question on the same delicate balance as the rest of the evidence. A more decisive discovery would be the presence of brine in any considerable quantity at some point on the coast: failing that, the southern end of the lake as nearest to the Dead Sea, would be the most convenient position for such curing-yards as formed the staple industry of Tarichex.[1] Kerak, too, lies on a peninsula, just where the Jordan issues from the Lake, and is the only position on the coast which now suits Josephus' description of Tarichex as washed on more than one side by the sea.

Its Industries.

Tarichex is a Greek word, and means 'pickling places,' and Strabo says that 'at Tarichex the lake supplied the best fish for curing.'[2] The pickled fish of Galilee were known throughout the Roman world: not only were large quantities taken up to Jerusalem at the season of the yearly feasts for the multi-

Takar-Aar of the Mohar's travels (*Handbook*, p. 279) cannot be thought of for Tarichex is a Greek name. Nor is Neubauer's identification of Tarichex with the Talmudic בית ירח, which he supposes to have been corrupted to תריח, at all likely; though בית ירח is placed near Sinnabris, probably by the issue of the Jordan (*Géog. du Talmud*, p. 216, cf. with p. 31). Kerak he supposes to be a corruption of קיר ירח = בית ירח. But this is equally unlikely. More probable is the hypothesis that Kerak is a reminiscence of Raḳḳath.

[1] Seetzen (*Reisen*) reports the name Mellaha, 'salt,' as heard by him near Kerak. Robinson (*B.R.* iii. 263) suspects a confusion with 'Ain Mellaha on Lake Huleh; but Frei reports that, while he missed the name Sinn-in-Nabra, Mellaha was given him as the name of a place to be sought for on the hill slopes, and Kasteren heard the coast-level called Mellaha (for these references see n. 1, p. 452), and Guérin reports the name Khurbet el Mellaha. If this name be really there, it would go far towards fixing the southern site.

[2] xvi. ch. ii. § 45. Pickled fish (Ταρίχη) were much known in the Roman and Greek world. Many places on the Egyptian coast had the name Ταριχέαι. The Galilean port is called Ταριχέαι, Ταριχαῖαι, and Ταριχαία.

tudes which gathered there, but barrels of them were carried round the Mediterranean. Josephus describes Taricheæ as full of materials for ship-building, and with many artisans.[1] The harbour could shelter a fleet of vessels. That so important a place, and moreover one not like Tiberias, official and foreign, but thoroughly Galilean, as Josephus testifies, and a centre of the disciples' own craft, should never be mentioned in the Gospels is remarkable.[2] The reason may be that, at this date, Taricheæ was still Greek—the name implies that its industry was at least of foreign introduction. But if the town really lay at the south-west corner of the lake, we must remember that this district never seems to have been visited by our Lord and His disciples. Perhaps it was out of the way of those main roads which they selected for their journeys, and yet not solitary enough to afford them a retreat. It is not only Taricheæ that is omitted from the Gospels ; nothing south of Gennesaret is mentioned, neither Tiberias nor the Baths, nor Sinnabris, nor Taricheæ, nor Homonœa, nor Scythopolis.[3]

North of Tiberias lay Magdala, the present Mejdel on the Plain of Gennesaret,[4] and Capernaum, Bethsaida, and

[1] iii. *Wars*, x. 6.

[2] Large draughts of fish, such as we read of in the Gospels, must have been carried to Taricheæ to be cured. They could not be otherwise used in that tropical climate.

[3] How little is to be inferred from the silence of the Gospels about places mentioned in Josephus is to be seen from the reverse case of the silence of Josephus about Nazareth. He agitated and fought pretty well all over Galilee, he mentions many villages as obscure as Nazareth, and yet he is silent about the latter. Homonœs (Joseph. *Life*, 54), 'Ομονοία, thirty stades from Tiberias, 'Ard el Hamma (Furrer, *Z.D.P.V.* ii. 52), or Umm Jûnia as on *P.E.F. Map*, 1891. On the absolutely lost city of Philoteria, which lay to the south of the Lake of Galilee, Polybius v. 10, cf. Schürer I. i. 196.

[4] Migdal-el, cf. Josephus.

Chorazin upon sites which will probably always remain matters of dispute. Chorazin might be Khersa on the eastern shore, but is more probably the present ruins[1] of Kerâseh northwards from Tell-Hum. Capernaum has been assigned both to Tell-Hum, three miles SW. of the issue of Jordan and Khan Minyeh on the northern edge of Gennesaret; but the evidence is greatly in favour of the latter site,[2] and one may fix the house of Jesus, as Mark calls it, the birthplace of the Gospel, at that north-east corner of fair Gennesaret, where the waves beat now on an abandoned shore, but once there was a

Magdala.

Chorazin.

Capernaum.

[1] With which both Arculf, about 670 A.D., and Willibald, 723-726, identify it.

[2] Capernaum was Kephar-Nahum, the village of Nahum. A strong Christian tradition from the sixth century onward has fixed it at Tell-Hum, and this site is preferred by such authorities as Wilson, Furrer, and Socin (*Bäed.* ed. 3, 258; also Schürer, II. ii. p. 71). Christian tradition has erred in regard to other sites, *e.g.* Sychar, as we have seen. Tell-Hum is an impossible contraction from Kephar-Nahum. There is no Tell at the place, and Guérin (*Galil.* i. 279) is right in deriving the name from Tanhum, a Jewish Rabbi buried here (cf. the *Jichus ha-Abot* in Carmoly, *Itiner, etc., des xiii^e-xvii^e siècle*, 449, 478. But the *Jichus ha-Ṣadiḳim*, *ib.* 385, sets there the tombs both of Nahum and Tanhum). Tell-Hum is on the great road, and so near the frontier that it suits Capernaum's character as a customs city, but it is a waterless site, with no such fountain as Josephus describes in Capernaum, iii. *Wars*, x. 8, nor near enough to Gennesaret to suit Josephus' description.

For Khan Minyeh the tradition is nearly as old. Arculf (670) found Capernaum here, and in 1334 Isaac Chilo (*Les Chemins de Jérus.*, in Carmoly 259), who arrives at Kefar Nahum, says that here aforetime dwelt Minim, or sorcerers, a name given by Jews to all early converts to Christianity. The Talmud defines sinners, or Minim, as 'sons of Kefar Nahum.' Conder and others therefore see the survival of Minim in Minyeh. Furrer (*Z.D.P.V.* ii. 58 ff.) objects that a nickname would scarcely survive where the real name had died, and Gildemeister (*ib.* iv. 194 ff.) says Minyeh, which he spells from old authorities *el-munja*, is the Arabic word (common in Egypt and Spain), derived from the Greek *μονή* and = mansio, villa, steading, small village. Here, in the eleventh century, lay a place called Munjat Hischām (Kazwini's *Lexicon*). Hischam was dropped; in 1430 El-Munja is mentioned as a large village, after which even the whole lake is called (El-Munja is the frequent Spanish Almunia). Tristram, *Israel*, gives the form Minîyeh; so Delitzsch

quay and a busy town, and the great road from east to west poured its daily stream of life. With regard to Bethsaida, it has been supposed by most that the references in the Gospels require us to conceive of two places of that name. Of one of these there can be no doubt, Bethsaida, Fisher-Home, was the name of a village on the east bank of Jordan, and near the river's mouth, which the tetrarch Philip rebuilt and named Julias, in honour of the daughter of Augustus.[1] This is the Bethsaida to which Jesus withdrew on hearing of the Baptist's death,[2] and near which *was the desert place*,[3] described by John [4] as on *the other side of the Sea of Galilee*, where the five thousand, who had followed Him *on foot* by the fords over Jordan,[5] were miraculously fed. The level plain on the east of the Jordan, the Butaiha, so fertile that some have claimed it for Gennesaret, still helps us to understand how there was much *grass in the place*.[6] When the meal was over, Jesus, we are told, constrained His disciples to *go to the other side before towards Bethsaida.*

Bethsaida.

derives the name from Mineh, *harbour*. However this may be, Khan Minyeh suits generally the description of Josephus, iii. *Wars*, x. 8; while he might as easily be brought here when wounded on the Jordan (*Life*, 71-73) as to Tell-Hum. The references in the Gospels to Capernaum all suit Khan Minyeh. There are ruins, Quaresmius ii. 568, both on the plain, Robinson and Merrill (*E. of Jordan* 301 f.) who found a city wall, and on the hill, Schumacher, (*Z.D.P.V.* xiii. 70: place-names Tell el 'Oreme, ḍahr es sillam, arḍ es siḳi umm Je'ade[?]). Robinson, *L.R.* 348-358; Conder (*Handbook* and *T.W.*); Henderson (*Pal.* 158 f.); Keim's *Jesus*, Eng. Ed. ii. 367 ff.; Stanley, *Sin. and Pal.* 384, etc.

[1] xviii. *Antt.* ii. 1; ii. *Wars*, ix. 1. On its position cf. xviii. *Antt.* ii. 1, which fixes it on the lake with *Life*, 72, near Jordan; cf. ii. *Wars*, xiii. 2, across Jordan, though this may be the other Julias of Herod Antipas.

[2] Luke ix. 10. [3] Mark vi. 31; Matt. xiv. 13. [4] John vi. 10.

[5] One is now two miles from the mouth, *P.E.F.* Large Map.

[6] John vi. 10. They sat down on *the green grass*, Mark vi. 39: *on the grass* Matt. xiv. 19.

Does this oblige us to admit another Bethsaida on the western coast? Some, however unwillingly,[1] conclude that it does, and have found the second Bethsaida either as a suburb of Julias on the west bank of Jordan,[2] or farther along the coast at 'Ain Tabigha.[3] But when Jesus urges His disciples *to go across* to Bethsaida, this does not imply a crossing to the west, for Josephus speaks of 'sailing over from Tiberias to Taricheæ,' though these towns lay on the same side of the lake.[4] And in this case it would be natural for Jesus to wish to return from the scene of the miracle, which we may place some way down the eastern coast, to Bethsaida-Julias, for, according to Luke, He had just fled there from Herod's jurisdiction in the west. The Fourth Gospel, it is true, speaks of *Bethsaida in Galilee*,[5] but this need not mean that it lay west of the Jordan, for, as we have seen, the province of Galilee ran right round the lake, and included most of the level coast-land on the east.[6] It is not, therefore, necessary to demand more than one Bethsaida.[7] Wherever these three —Capernaum, Bethsaida and Chorazin—may have been, the well-nigh complete obliteration of all of them is remarkable in this, that they were the very three towns which our Saviour condemned to humiliation.

Down the east coast the city of Gergesa has been identified with the ruins known as Khersa, at the only

[1] Reland (653-655), who feels himself very unwillingly shut up to two Bethsaidas. Henderson, *Pal.* 156, 157.

[2] Thomson, *Land and Book.*

[3] Fürer v. Haimendorf, 1566.

[4] *Life*, 89.

[5] xii. 21.

[6] As the Kad'at Tubariyeh does to-day (cf. ii. *Wars*, xx. 4). Even Judas of Gamala is sometimes called Galilean, xviii. *Antt.* i. 6. Ptolemaus, 140 A.D., reckons Julias to Galilee, but by that time it had been definitely attached to the latter (84 A.D.).

[7] So also Holtzman, *Jahrb. für Prot. Theol.* 1878, No. 2. 383 f.

portion of that coast on which the steep hills come down to the shore.[1] Farther south there is the gorge of Fik, or Aphek, up which the great road ran from Scythopolis to Damascus. On a long camel's-neck of hill, which fills the middle of this gorge, the Kula'at el Hosn, Gamala has been placed, but not past doubt.[2] Hippos, however, was certainly the present Susiyeh, above the same gorge.[3] Aphek lay a little higher up on the plateau, the present village of Fik. And Gadara looked up the lake from the heights immediately south of the Yarmuk.[4] Below Gadara, in the Ghôr, there must have been villages, some by the lake, like the present Semak, and some at the foot of the hills, where ruins now lie.[5]

Gergesa.

Gamala and Hippos.

Gadara.

This catalogue of the towns on the Lake of Galilee, if it fail to fix for us the sites of many of them, cannot but force our imagination to realise the almost unbroken line of buildings by which the lake was surrounded. Of this her coasts still bear the mark. As the Dead Sea is girdled by an almost constant hedge of driftwood, so the Sea of Galilee is girdled by a scarcely less continuous belt of ruins—the drift of her ancient towns.[6] In the time of our Lord she must have mirrored

A girdle of towns.

[1] Gergesa is the reading supported by the documents. Gerasa is impossible. Keim, *Jesus*, has argued strongly for Gadara.

[2] See, for the arguments between this and Gamli, Schürer, *Hist.* ii. 1.

[3] Clermont Ganneau was the first to suggest that the name Susiyeh, the Arabic equivalent of Hippos, might be found here, and the discovery was made by Schumacher, *P.E.F.Q.* 1887, 36 ff.; *The Jaulân*, 244; Neubauer, *Géo. du Talm.* 238 f.

[4] For a description of Gadara see ch. xxviii.

[5] Over the present road, down the Ghôr, south-west from Gadara, and just at the foot of the hill.

[6] 'These accumulated fragments, the multitude of towns, and the magnificence of the constructions of which they were proofs, recalled to my mind the road which leads along the foot of Vesuvius from Castellamare

within the outline of her guardian hills little else than city-walls, houses, synagogues, wharves and factories.[1] Greek architecture hung its magnificence over her simple life: Herod's castle, temple and theatres in Tiberias; the bath-houses at Hammath; a hippodrome at Taricheæ; and, farther back from the shore, the high-stacked houses of Hippos; the amphitheatre in Gadara, looking up the lake with the Acropolis above it, and the paved street with its triumphal archway; the great Greek villas on the heights about Gadara; with a Roman camp or two, high enough up the slopes to catch the western breeze, and daily sending its troops to relieve guard in the cities. All this was what imposed itself upon that simple open-air life on fields and roads and boats, which we see in the Gospels, so sunny and so free. Amid the sowing and reaping, the fishing and mending of nets, the journeying to and fro upon foot, all the simple habits of the native life, do we not catch some shadows of that other world, which had grown up around it, in the crowds that are said to grind on one another in the narrow lanes, like corn between millstones;[2] in the figures of the centurion, the publican, and the demoniac crying that his name was Legion; in the stories of the pulling down of barns and the building of greater; of opulent householders leaving their well-appointed villas for a time with every servant in his place, and the porter set to watch; of market-places and *streets*, as well as *lanes*;[3] in the comparison of the towns on the lake to great cities—Sodom

to Portici. As there, the borders of the Lake of Gennesareth seem to have borne cities instead of harvests and forests.'—*Lamartine*.

[1] There were tanneries and potteries by the present 'Ain et Tabighah.

[2] Mark v. 24: συνέθλιβον αὐτὸν; cf. Luke viii. 42: συνέπνιγον αὐτὸν.

[3] *Go ye out into the streets and lanes.*

and Gomorrah, Tyre and Sidon and Nineveh ; in the mention of the sins of a city,[1] and of Mammon and *all the things after which the Gentiles seek*, and in the acknowledgment that Galilee was a place where a man might *gain the whole world*.[2]

Two glimpses of our Lord's time.

Twice it has seemed to me that I saw the lake as it lay in those thronged days. One of these occasions was among the tombs of Gadara. Some peasants had just dug up the gravestone of a Roman soldier, whose name was given—P . . . Aelius, and that he had lived forty years, and served nineteen ; but it also said that he was of a Legion, the Fourteenth.[3] As I read this last detail—and the word is still stamped on other stones in the neighbourhood—I realised how familiar that engine of foreign oppression had been to this region, so that the poor madman could find nothing fitter than it to describe the incubus upon his own life. *My name is Legion*, he said, *for we are many*. The second occasion was at Fik, as I looked across the site of Gamala and

[1] Luke vii. 37. [2] Luke ix. 25.

[3] The whole inscription read as follows :

DM
P . AEL . . .
BI . . . . . Λ
. . . . . . IOB
MILES LEG XIIII
G AÑO XL
STIP XIX ER
VDES INSTIT
VTI M GAI
VS ET RVFI .
US PROCV
RAVERVNT

Publius (?) Aelius . . . A soldier of the Fourteenth Legion, Gemina, in his fortieth year, and nineteenth of service ; the heirs designate, Marcus Gaius and Rufinus (?), saw to everything.

down the gorge, on the lake and the houses of Tiberias opposite—their squalor glorified in the mid-day sun. I saw nothing but water and houses, and the sound came over the hill of a bugle of a troop of Turkish horse. It was a glimpse and an echo of that time when Greek cities and Roman camps environed the lake. Yet only a glimpse; for Gamala should have been stacked with her high houses, and the lake dotted with sails, and on the air there should have been the hum of tens of thousands of a population crowded within a few square miles. The only sound I heard, save the bugle, was of bees. The scene differs from what it was as much as a wood in winter from a wood in summer, or a bay at ebb from a bay near full tide, when the waters are rushing and the boats are sailing to and fro.

The industries of the Lake of Galilee were agriculture and fruit-growing; dyeing and tanning, with every department of a large carrying trade; but chiefly fishing, boat-building and fish-curing. Of the last, which spread the lake's fame over the Roman world before its fishermen and their habits became familiar through the Gospel, there is no trace in the Evangelists. The fisheries themselves were pursued by thousands of families. They were no monopoly; but the fishing-grounds, best at the north end of the lake, where the streams entered, were free to all. And the trade was very profitable.[1]

It was in the ranks of those who pursued this free and hardy industry that Christ looked for His disciples. Not

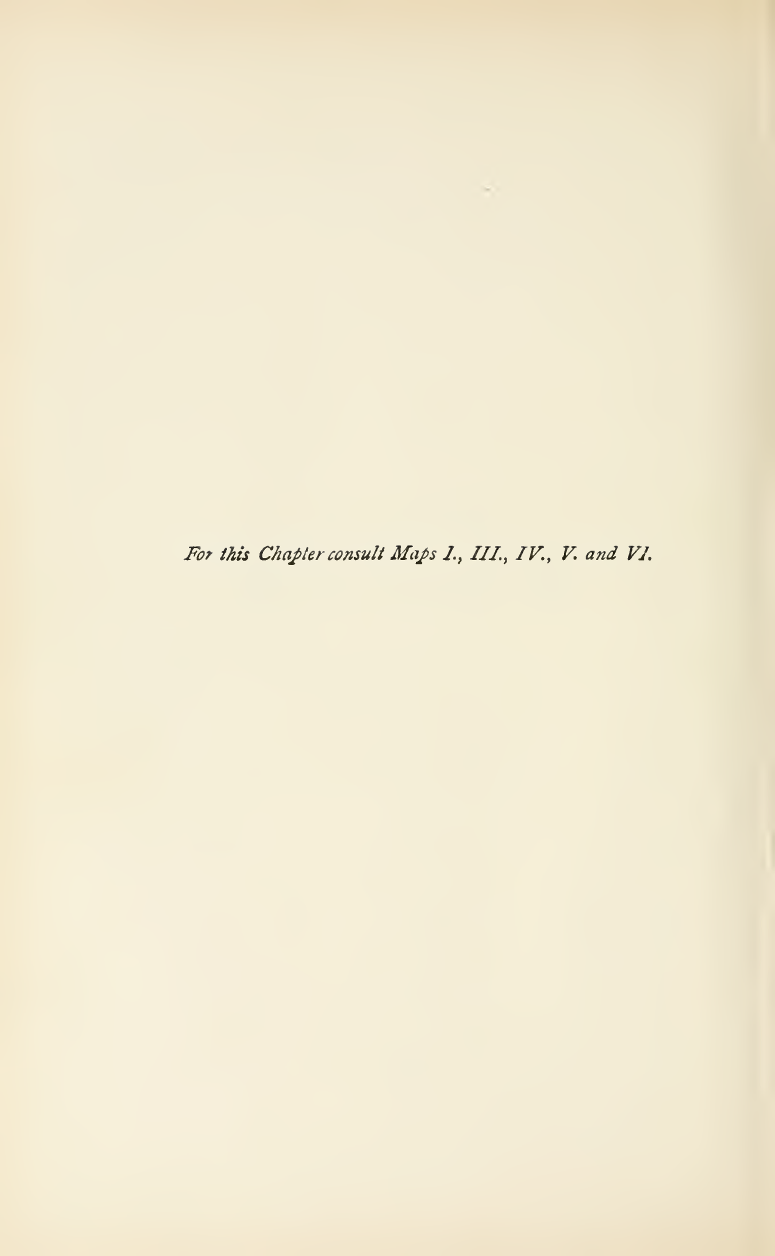
[1] See above on Taricheæ, pp. 451-455. Frei reports that, in one cast of the net from the shore, he saw a fisherman secure twenty-eight, and he rightly infers from that an enormous wealth of fish in the lake, *Z.D.P.V.* ix. 102. On the kinds of fish, see Hasselquist's *Travels*; Tristram, *The Land of Israel*: Merrill, *East of Jordan*, i. 41. They are chiefly a kind of mullet.

wealthy, they were yet independent, with no servile tempers about them ; and with no private or trade wrongs disadjusting their consciences. This was one of the reasons for which our Lord chose them. In that age it would have been easy to gather, as David did into the Cave of Adullam, all that were in debt, or in distress or discontented, or had run away from their masters. But such would not have been the men to preach a spiritual gospel, the coming, not of a national, but of a universal kingdom. Men brought up, however justly, to feel the wrongs of their class or of their trade before anything else, would have been of no use to Christ. Just as futile would those 'innovators' have proved, whom Josephus describes to have so largely composed the population of Galilee. Christ went to a trade which had no private wrongs : and called men, not from their dreams, but from work they were contented to do from day to day till something higher should touch them. And so it has come to pass that not the jargon of the fanatics and brigands in the highlands of Galilee, but the speech of the fishermen of her lake, and the instruments of their simple craft, have become the language and symbolism of the world's religion.



CHAPTER XXII

THE JORDAN VALLEY



For this Chapter consult Maps I., III., IV., V. and VI.

THE JORDAN VALLEY

AMONG the rivers of the world the Jordan is unique by a twofold distinction of Nature and History. There are hundreds of other streams more large, more useful, or more beautiful; there is none which has been more spoken about by mankind. Other rivers have awakened a richer poetry in the peoples through whom they pass,—for the references to Jordan in the Bible are very few, and, with two or three exceptions, prosaic,—but of none has the music sounded so far, or so pleasantly, across the world. There are holy waters which annually attract to themselves a greater number of pilgrims, but there is none to which pilgrims travel from such various and distant lands. In influence upon the imagination of man, the Nile is perhaps the Jordan's only competitor. He has drawn to his valley one after another of the greatest races of the world; his mystery and annual miracle have impressed the mind equally of ancient and of modern man. But the Nile has never been adopted by a universal religion. To the fathers of human civilisation, that silent flood, which cut their land in two, across which their dead were ferried, and the Lord Sun himself passed daily to his death among the desert hills, was the symbolic border of the next world. But who now knows this, who feels it,

Natural and historical uniqueness of the Jordan.

except as a fact of very ancient history? Whereas, still to half the world, the short, thin thread of the Jordan is the symbol of both great frontiers of the spirit's life on earth—the baptism through which it passes into God's Church, and the waters of death which divide this pilgrim fellowship from the promised land.

The Nile and the Jordan, otherwise so different, are alike in this, that the historical singularity of each has behind it as remarkable a singularity of physical formation. Both valleys were laid open by the same geological disturbance,[1] and it left them equally monstrous and unique. Every one knows the incomparableness of the Nile—that solitary and stupendous river which, unfed for a thousand miles by any tributary or by rain from heaven, has sustained of his own resource the civilisation of a mighty empire, and still, by his annual flood, bestows on the desert a fertility not excelled in any country, which has all the fountains of heaven and of the great deep in its fortune. In its own way the Jordan is as solitary and extreme an effect of natural forces. There may be something on the surface of another planet to match the Jordan Valley: there is nothing on this. No other part of our earth, uncovered by water, sinks to 300 feet below the level of the ocean.[2] But here we have a rift more

[1] Hull, *P.E.F. Survey Memoirs*, *Geology*, 108; Dawson, *Mod. Science in Bible Lands*, 588; Gregory, *Proc. Brit. Assoc.* 1894. See below.

[2] The other depressions of the surface of the continents below ocean-level are:—Asia: the level of the Caspian Sea is more than 80 feet below that of the Black Sea; and part of the Caspian coasts, a depression between Lake Elton and the Ural, in which a lake used to lie, but it is now dry, is 151 feet below the Black Sea. In Africa there is the Fayum, part of which is a few feet—5 to 20 feet—under sea-level; and the Shott Melr'ir marshes and salt fields in the Sahara, which are from 95 to 279 feet below the Mediterranean.

than one hundred and sixty miles long,[1] and from two to fifteen broad, which falls from the sea-level to as deep as 1292 feet below it at the coast of the Dead Sea, while the bottom of the latter is 1300 feet deeper still. In this trench there are the Jordan, a river nearly one hundred miles long; two great lakes, respectively twelve and fifty-three miles in length; large tracts of arable country, especially about Gennesaret, Bethshan and Jericho, regions which were once very populous, like the coasts of the Lake of Galilee; and the sites of some famous towns—Tiberias, Jericho, and the 'Cities of the Plain.' Is it not true that on the earth there is nothing else like this deep, this colossal ditch?

Formation of the Jordan Valley.

Geologists[2] tell us that these regions, being covered with water, from which the granite peaks of Sinai alone protruded, great deposits of limestone were laid upon the ocean-bed. Under pressure from east and west the limestone rose above the water in long folds, running north and south.[3] Two of these folds are now the ranges on either side of the Jordan Valley, but the latter is due, not only to their elevation, but to a violent rupture of the strata between them. This 'fault' is not confined to that portion of the valley which is beneath sea-level: it extends all the way from Northern Syria, through between the Lebanons, down the Jordan

[1] From just below Lake Huleh, where the dip below sea-level begins, to the point on the Arabah south of the Dead Sea, where the valley rises again to sea-level.

[2] Hull, *P.E.F. Mem. Geol.* Pt. IV. ch. i. 108 ff.; Dawson, *Mod. Science in Bible Lands*, ch. viii. and App. iv.; Lartet, *La Mer Morte*; Conder, *T.W.* 217 ff. See also M. Blanckenhorn, *Z.D.P.V.*, 1896.

[3] 'Early in the Miocene epoch, . . . by tangential pressure of the earth's surface due to contraction, . . . the contraction being due to the secular cooling of the crust.'—Hull, p. 108.

and along the Wady 'Arabah to the Gulf of 'Akaba, or three hundred and fifty miles.[1] Had the two long-folds risen in complete isolation from each other, the valley would to-day have been an arm of the Red Sea stretching to the foot of Lebanon, and in such a case how changed the whole history of Palestine must have been! But the two folds were not absolutely disconnected. As they rose from the waters there rose between them, near their southern end, a diagonal ridge of limestone, which is still visible about forty-five miles to the north of the Gulf of 'Akaba, in the present water-parting between 'Akaba and the Dead Sea.[2] This not only shut out the Red Sea, but shut in a part of the old ocean-bed with a large quantity of salt water.[3] There then followed a period of great rains, with perpetual snow and glaciers on Lebanon, during which the valley was filled with fresh water to an extent of two hundred miles,[4] or one long lake from the Sea of Galilee to some fifty miles south of the present end of the Dead Sea. How the valley passed from that condition to its present state is not clear. Some think the change of climate—great decrease of rain with the disappearance of the glaciers—sufficient to account for the gradual shrinking of the one large lake to the limits of two smaller ones.[5] There are, however, traces of various

[1] Dawson, p. 442.

[2] 'The water-parting which here crosses the valley has doubtless continued as such ever since the whole region emerged from the ocean.'—Hull, *ibid.* 20.

[3] Hull, p. 109 (also 120). Hull accounts for the peculiar fauna and flora of the Lake of Galilee and of Jordan by their original connection with the ocean, 109, 110. They suffered the change experienced elsewhere on the earth's surface, *e.g.* on the Caspian Sea, of the passage from salt to fresh water.

[4] Hull, 15, 113, with sketch-map, p. 72, showing the lake; Dawson, 444.

[5] Hull, 115.

sea-beaches so distinct, and in some cases so far apart, that it has been inferred that the confinement of the water successively within these must have been caused as much by sudden convulsions, for which the region has always been notorious, as by gradual desiccation. This inference is supported by the fact that, within the observation of man, the Dead Sea has not become smaller, but has rather increased.[1] Volcanic disturbances on a very large scale took place in the Jordan Valley within comparatively recent times.[2]

Sections of the Jordan Valley.

In this long rift from the Lebanons to the Red Sea there are six distinct sections: the Beka'a, or valley between the Lebanons; the Upper Jordan, from its sources at the foot of Hermon through Lake Huleh to the Lake of Galilee; this Lake itself; the Lower Jordan to its mouth at Jericho; the Dead Sea; and, thence to the Gulf of 'Akaba, the Wady 'Arabah. Of these, the first and the last fall outside our area, and we have already visited the Lake of Galilee; so that there only remain to be described the Upper Jordan, the Lower Jordan, and the Dead Sea.

I. The Upper Jordan.

The sources of the Jordan.

The great valley of Palestine, as it runs out from between the Lebanons, makes a slight turn eastward round the foot of Hermon, so that Hermon not only looks right down the rest of its course, but is able to discharge into this three-fourths of the waters

[1] Conder, *T.W.* 210, 220.

[2] Nötling, *Z.D.P.V.* 1885

which gather on his high and ample bulk. By these and the streams, which break from the rest of the surrounding hills, the floor of the valley is soaked in moisture. Once, probably, it was all a lake. To-day this has shrunk to its lower end—the so-called Lake of Huleh, and the rest is marsh and fat meadow, with a few mounds and terraces covered by trees. Four streams, which unite before entering the lake, contest the honour of being considered as the source of the Jordan. The only one which does not spring upon the eastern watershed is the Nahr Bareighit, which comes down the Merj 'Ayun from a source very slightly separated from the valley of the Litâny. It is the smallest. The next one, the Nahr Hasbany, springs half a mile to the north of Hasbeya, from a buttress of Hermon, and comes south between Hermon and the Jebel Dahar. This is the longest of the four, and most in the line of the Jordan itself, but it has much less water than either of the other two—the Nahr Leddân, which is the heaviest but the shortest, springing from Tell-el-Kadi, in the bosom of the valley itself; and the Nahr Banias, which has the most impressive origin of all four, in the very roots of Hermon, and gathers to itself the largest number of tributaries. It is these two which have generally been regarded as the sources of Jordan.[1]

[1] No ancient writer mentions any sources of the Jordan but these two last at Dan and Banias. Josephus styles the stream which springs from Dan 'the so-called Little Jordan,' iv. *Wars*, i. 1, cf. viii. *Antt.* viii. 4; again, 'the Lesser Jordan,' v. *Antt.* iii. 1. The source at Banias he calls the reputed fountain of Jordan, i. *Wars*, xxi. 3; iii. *ibid.* x. 7. It is in the latter passage that he tells his story of Lake Phiala as the ultimate source, from which he says it had been proved, by throwing chaff into it, that the fountains at Banias were fed. Phiala, '120 stadia on the way to Trachonitis,' is probably Birket er Ram, Robinson, *B.R.* iii. 614 ff.

The *Onomasticon*, sub Λεῖσα (Laisa), gives Paneas as the source. From Arculf (700) onwards through Willibald (722), and through the entire series

Travellers usually arrive first at the source of the Leddân. It is a mound, perhaps a hundred yards long, and rising some sixty feet above the plain before the plain rises to Hermon. Draped by trees and bush, it is plumed and crested by a grove of high oaks. On the western side, through some huge boulders, whose lower half its rapid rush has worn bare, a stream, about twelve feet broad by three deep, breaks from the bowels of the earth ; while another, more shallow and quiet, appears higher up in a jungle of reeds and bushes. This opulent mound is called Tell-el-Kadi, and Kadi means the same as Dan. It is, therefore, supposed to be the site of Laish or Leshem, which the Danites took for their city.[1] But this might also be fixed at Banias, and with even more probability,[2] for Banias is a better site than Tell-el-Kadi for the capital of the district, and we cannot conceive any tribe to have been able to hold Tell-el-Kadi who did not also hold Banias.[3]

Tell-el-Kadi.

Paneas lies scarcely an hour to the north of Tell-el-Kadi. From the latter you pass a well-watered meadow, covered by trees, and then a broad terrace, with oaks, like an English park, till you come to the edge of a deep gorge, through which there roars a

Paneas.

of pilgrim narratives and chronicles in Crusading times (*e.g.* Saewulf, Fetellus, Benjamin of Tudela, De Joinville, etc. etc.), and later writers like Maundeville (1322), Felix Fabri (1480)—the story runs that Jordan springs from two sources, Jor and Dan, at the foot of Lebanon, near Banias. (But Daniel (1106) calls the two issues from the Lake of Galilee, Jor and Dan.) How the names arose is evident. Dan was known to have lain there, and they took the second syllable in the name of the river to be its name. This left Jor, which, it was easy to suppose, was the name of the other fountain. But the ancients and mediævals located Dan, not at Tell-el-Kadi, but at Paneas.

[1] See p. 57. In Josephus' time, when it was called Daphne, there was 'a temple of the golden calf,' iv. *Wars* i. 1.

[2] *Onomasticon*, art. Λεῖσα.

[3] See p. 481.

headlong stream, half stifled by bush. An old Roman Bridge takes you over, and then through a tangle of trees, brushwood and fern you break into sight of a high cliff of limestone, reddened by the water that oozes over its face from the iron soil above.[1] In the cliff is a cavern. Part of the upper rock has fallen, and from the *débris* of boulders and shingle below there bursts and bubbles along a line of thirty feet a full-born river. The place is a very sanctuary of waters, and from time immemorial men have drawn near it to worship. As you stand within the charm of it—and this is a charm not uncommon in the Lebanons—you understand why the early Semites adored the Baalim of the subterranean waters even before they raised their gods to heaven, and thanked them for the rain.[2] This must have been one of the chief dwellings of the Baalim—perhaps Baal-gad of the Book of Joshua.[3] When the Greeks came in later times they also felt the presence of deity, and dedicated the grotto, as an inscription still testifies, to Pan and the Nymphs.[4] Hill, cavern, and fountain were called the Paneion,[5] and the town and district Paneas.[6] In 20 B.C. Herod the Great received the

[1] The cliff is 'from a hundred to a hundred and fifty feet,' Robinson, *L.R.* 106.

[2] Robertson Smith, *Religion of the Semites*, 97, etc.

[3] Joshua xi. 17, xii. 7, xiii. 5. There was also a Baal-Hermon. Judges iii. 3, the Mount of Baal-Hermon.

[4] *Πανί τε καὶ Νύμφαις* is the first line of an inscription on the rock of the grotto.

[5] Josephus calls the whole 'place' *τὸ Πάνειον*, xv. *Antt.* x. 3, i. *Wars*, xxi. 3. In iii. *Wars*, x. 7, he gives the name to the fountain. Eusebius, *H.E.* vii. 17, gives it to the hill. In Josephus' time the cave, he says, overhung an unfathomable pool.

[6] See Schürer's note, *Hist. of Jewish People*, II. i. 133. *Πανιάς* or *Πανεάς*, properly an adjective, designates both the *country* (xv. *Antt.* x. 3, etc.; cf. Pliny, *H.N.* v. 18) and the *town* (xviii. *Antt.* ii. 1).

whole district from Augustus,[1] and built to him a temple of white marble, setting the bust of Cæsar hard by the shrine of Pan.[2] Philip, the tetrarch of this region, embellished the town and called it Cæsarea,[3] and it came to be known as his Cæsarea—Cæsarea Philippi—to distinguish it from his father's on the sea-coast.[4] The official designation was altered by Agrippa II.[5] to Neronias, which was used along with the name Cæsarea even under Marcus Aurelius,[6] but then died out. Cæsarea lasted a little longer in conjunction with Paneas,[6] till Paneas survived alone, and has survived to the present day, only that Arabs, with no *p* upon their lips, spell it Bâniâs.[7]

Cæsarea Philippi.

The extraordinary mixture of religious and political interests which gathered upon this charming site during the first centuries of our era may be seen at a glance, in all its rich confusion, upon the pageful of the town's coins which De Saulcy has reproduced.[8] Here, on one coin, we have the syrinx or pipe of Pan; on a second Pan leaning on a tree and playing a flute; on a third the mouth of the sacred cavern, with a railing in front of it, and Pan within, again leaning on a tree and playing the flute; on others the laurelled head of Apollo, a pillared temple, and inside the figure of Poppæa, Nero's wife, whom he first kicked to death and afterwards raised to divine honours; various emperors with their title Divus,

Coins of Pan.

[1] On the death of Zenodorus, the previous lord of these parts, xv. *Antt.* x. 3; i. *Wars*, xxi. 3.

[2] xviii. *Antt.* ii. 1.

[3] xviii. *Antt.* ii. 1; iii. *Wars*, ix. 7, etc.

[4] xx. *Antt.* ix. 4.

[5] De Saulcy, *Numismatique de la Terre Sainte*, 315, 316: Plate xviii., cf. No. 7 with No. 8.

[6] *Ibid.*

[7] بانياس. The tradition of its Greek origin was strong among the Arabs, only they took its founder to have been Balnias, *i.e.* Pliny.

[8] *Op. cit.* Plate xviii.

and the town's own title, 'Cæsarea—August, Sacred and With Rights of Sanctuary—under Paneion.'[1] This proves that the two systems of religion were carried on together, and that Pan was worshipped in the grotto, whose niches still bear his name, while divine honours were paid to Cæsar in the white temple that stood perhaps on the cliff above,[2] the site of the present Mohammedan shrine of Sheikh Khudr, or St. George.[3]

Jesus in the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi.

While both these sanctuaries were open, and men thus worshipped side by side the forces of nature and the incarnation of political power, Jesus came with His disciples to the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi. Never did the place better earn its title of Asylos, or shelter nobler fugitives. The journey of our Lord and His disciples was, in the first instance, a retreat from Jewish hostility to the neutrality of Gentile ground. But it became also the occasion of His resolution to return to meet the Jews, and the death which lay ready for Him in their hate. From this farthest corner of the land Jesus set His face steadfastly to Jerusalem. The scenery had already been consecrated by the crisis and turning of a soul, by the hope which another exile had seen break through his drenching sorrow, like as the sun breaks through the mists and saturated woods of the hills around.

Psalm xlii.

'. . . *From the land of Jordan,*
And the Hermons, from the hill Miṣ'ar,
Deep unto deep is calling at the noise of thy waterfalls:
All thy breakers and billows are gone over me.

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[1] *Ibid.* 8. ΚΑΙϹ . ϹΕΒ . ΙΕΡ . ΚΑΙ . ΑϹ . ΥΠ . ΠΑΝΙΩ . ΑϹ . is for ἄσυλος, with rights of asylum or sanctuary.

[2] The exact position of Herod's temple is unknown. Hewn stones are scattered all over the place.

[3] See p. 162.

With a breaking in my bones mine enemies reproach me,
While they say unto me all the day, Where is thy God?

Why art thou cast down, O my soul?
And why art thou disquieted upon me?
Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise Him,
Health of my countenance, and my God.'[1]

This Psalm, amidst its own sympathetic scenery, may well have come into the hearts of these fugitives, and accomplished its due ministry to Him, who at all such crises in His life, summoned no other angel to His aid than some such winged and ready word of Scripture. Yet even these high matters cannot have absorbed the disciples' attention, where so many pagan sanctuaries broke

[1] Psalm xlii-xliii. *The Land of Jordan* usually means in the Old Testament the land across Jordan. The plural *Hermons* (not Hermonites) must refer to the triple peaks of Hermon. If these two identifications hold, then the standpoint of the Psalmist is fixed in the corner between Hermon and Jordan—the corner where Banias stands. To the two localities mentioned, a third, the Hill Miṣ'ar, מִצְעָר, is placed in apposition. It may mean, as it stands in the text, Hill of Littleness. But it may also be a proper name; and it is at least remarkable that in the same neighbourhood there should be two or three names with the same or kindred radicals. These are (1) Za'ura, زعورا; צ often weakens to ז (Wright's *Comp. Grammar*, etc., pp. 58, 61); (2) Wady Za'ârah, زعارة, above Banias; (3) Khurbet Mezâra, مزارا. I suggest that these may be a reminiscence of the name of a hill in this district, called Miṣ'ar; and surely none other would have been put by the Psalmist in apposition to the Hermons. Cheyne says: 'To me this appendage to "Hermonim" seems a poetic loss. Unless the little mountain has a symbolic meaning I could wish it away.' I cannot see this; the symbolic meanings suggested for Hermonim and Miṣ'ar are all forced, and even if we got a natural one, it would be out of place after the literal *land of Jordan*. To employ all as proper names is suitable to a lyric. Baethgen's interpretation (following Smend) of the Hill of Littleness as equal to Mount Sion in contrast to Mount Hermon, and of the three factors, Jordan, Hermon, Sion, as an equivalent to the Holy Land; and his translation, *I remember those far from the land of Jordan, and the Hermons, far from the little hill*, are also forced and very improbable.

the native beauty of the scene with their insolent challenge, to all that was best in the Jewish heart. That a mere man, however exalted, should have a temple built to him, and especially by a Jewish prince, had filled Jewry with indignation. The little company of wayfarers must surely have talked of this obtrusive sanctuary. It is, therefore, very striking that just there and then they emphasised their own Master's claims upon the faith of mankind, and that the first clear confession of Christ's divine Sonship was made near the shrine in which men already worshipped a fellow-man as God. These were the two religions which were shortly to contest the world—the marble temple covering the bust of an Emperor, the group of exiles round the leader, whom His own people had rejected. They appeared to have this in common, that they were centred in individuals, that they both responded to the longing of the age for some embodiment of authority, that each of them paid divine homage to a man. Yet, even on that single point of resemblance, there was this distinction between them. He in the temple was only an official, the temporary symbol of a great power, to-day's dispenser of its largess, who to-morrow would be succeeded by another. But the little band of fugitives outside clung to their Leader for His own eternal sake. He was the Kingdom, He was the Religion, everything lay for ever in His character and His love. Herod built the temple to Augustus for the same reason for which he had paid previous homage to Cæsar and Antony, or for which his children afterwards ascribed divine honours on this same spot to Claudius and Nero—because each of these for the moment had all things in his gift. But it was because they counted all things but loss

Christ and the worship of Augustus.

for His sake that the disciples turned there and then to Christ, with a love and allegiance that could never be transferred to another, any more than God Himself might be imagined to yield to a successor in the faith of His creatures. And again, while the emperor compelled allegiance by his rank, his splendour, his power, Christ turned that very day from the symbol of all this to seek His kingdom by the way of sacrifice and death. *Ye know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and the great impose their authority upon them. . . . The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.* This was a contrast on which Christ often dwelt: nowhere can we better value the alternative which it presented to that generation, than here at Cæsarea by the sources of Jordan, where we see the apotheosis of the Gentile spirit in the temple raised to an Augustus by the flattery of a Herod, and Christ with His few disciples turning from it to His Cross and Sacrifice.

Military history of the Upper Jordan.

Before we leave this end of the Jordan Valley, we must notice one great function which it has performed throughout history. Running up into the Lebanons, this long hollow is the gate from the north into Palestine, and Banias, which was a fortress as well as a sanctuary, is the key of the gate. It is true that *the entering in of Hamath*, the other end of the pass through the Lebanons, is sometimes spoken of as if it were the northern entrance into Palestine, but it is really only the approach. Here in Dan lay the limit of the land of Israel. Beyond were rugged indefensible mountain ranges. If we may compare the region with one much more extensive,—the Lebanons were to Israel, for military purposes, what the mountains of Afghanistan

are to India, and the great fortress at Banias below Hermon, on the roads to Damascus and up the Beka', has a position not unlike that of Peshawur, near the entrance to the Khyber—though by the Syrian fortress there flows no river like the Indus. Did an invader come south between the Lebanons? He had to fight here: the battle by which Antiochus the Great won Palestine from the Ptolemies took place near Paneas.[1] Nor could the masters of Palestine hold the Upper Jordan Valley except at the same time they held Banias. During the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem the fortress was fiercely contested by Frank and Saracen. Did the Franks take it—then the rich valley was all theirs. Did the Saracens win it back, then the Franks[2] in their castle of Hûnîn, on the opposite hills of Naphtali, were obliged to arrange with them for a division of the deep pastures and fields between. And in the Ninth Crusade, when an expedition of Louis of France conquered all the Jordan Valley, they were obliged to retire from it, because they failed to capture also the castle of Banias.[3]

Paneas = Dan.

It is these frequent illustrations, taken from all parts of history, of the impossibility of holding the meadows and springs of the Upper Jordan, without also holding Banias and its castle, which make it seem probable that Leshem or Dan was the present Banias, and not (in spite of the name) Tell-el-Kadi. If there be in this latter name, which is doubtful, some reminiscence

[1] 198 B.C. Polybius xvi. 18; xxviii. 1.

[2] 'The lands in the plain belong half to the Franks and half to the Moslem, and here is the boundary, called "The Boundary of Dividing."' Ibn Jubair (1185 AD.) in Le Strange, *Pal. under Moslems.* 418.

[3] 1253 A.D. De Joinville, *Memoirs of Louis IX.*, Pt. II. One of the most stirring accounts in all the Chronicles of the Crusades.

of the synonymous Dan,[1] then it is possible to suppose that we have here, what we have in so many other cases, the transference of a name, a few miles from its original site. On all other appearances than the shadowy name, Banias, and not Tell-el-Kadi, is the ancient capital of the Danites, the northern limit of the land of Israel.

Lake Huleh.

The rest of this plain is of little interest. The Lake of Huleh is, without doubt, the Lake Semechonitis of Josephus,[2] and probably also the waters of Merom of the Book of Joshua.[3] The open water is thickly surrounded by swamps and jungles of the papyrus reed.[4] From the lower end of the lake, the Jordan enters the Great Rift below the level of the sea. It descends a narrow gorge in one almost continuous cascade, falling 680 feet in less than nine miles, and then through a delta of its own deposits glides quietly into the Lake of Galilee. Six miles above the lake it is crossed by the Bridge of the Daughters of Jacob, on the high road between Damascus and Galilee.[5]

[1] Kadi = Dan = Judge.

[2] v. *Antt.* v. 1; iii. *Wars*, x. 7; iv. *Wars*, i. 1.

[3] Josh. xi. 5, 6. The name 'The Height' is suitable for a lake so far above the Lake of Galilee; the neighbourhood is possible for chariots. The word 'waters,' however, scarcely suits a lake, and we have really no means of identifying the scene of Joshua's victory. The *Onomasticon* puts the water of Μεῤῥὰν near Dothan, twelve Roman miles from Sebaste. The origin of the name Huleh is unknown. The Lake might be easily drained; almost as easily it might be extended, as it seems once to have been, to the limits of the plain; cf. Quaresmius, *Elucid. Terr. Sanct.* II. vii. ch. xii. fol. 872. Huleh is the same name as Ulatha (see p. 541), and the ימא דחולתא of the Talmud, Neubauer, *Géog. du Talmud*, 24, 27 ff.

[4] The best account of the lake and its surroundings is in Macgregor's *Rob Roy on the Jordan*.

[5] See p. 427. For the country between Huleh and the Lake of Galilee see Schumacher, *Z.D.P.V.* xiii.

II. The Lower Jordan: The Ghôr.

From the Lake of Galilee to the Dead Sea the Jordan Valley is sixty-five miles long. Down the west are the mountains of Galilee and Samaria, with the great break between them of the Vale of Jezreel. They stand from 800 to 1500 feet above the valley floor, with higher ranges behind. On the other side run the hills of Gilead, their long flat edge some 2000 feet above Jordan, and broken only by the incoming valleys of the Yarmuk and Jabbok. Between these two ranges the valley varies in breadth from three to fourteen miles. For thirteen miles south of the lake the breadth is hardly more than four, then it expands to six or seven in the Plain of Bethshan, which rises by terraces towards the level of Esdraelon. Ten miles south of Bethshan the Samarian hills press eastward, and for the next thirteen the river runs closely by their feet, and the valley is three miles wide. Again the Samarian hills withdraw, and the valley widens first to eight miles and then gradually to fourteen, which is the breadth at Jericho. What we have, therefore, between Galilee and the Dead Sea is a long narrow vale twice expanding—at Bethshan and Jericho—to the dimensions of a plain. The Old Testament bestows on it both of the Hebrew names for valley—Deep and Opening.[1] Greek writers call it the Aulon or Hollow,[2] and Arabs

Divisions and names of the Ghôr.

[1] עמק of the southern end, Josh. xiii. 27; בקעה of the north end under Hermon, Josh. xi. 17 (LXX. Πεδία); Josh. xii. 7 (LXX. Πεδίον), and of the southern end at Jericho, Deut. xxxiv. 3.

[2] Αὐλών. So, *e.g.* Diod. Sic. ii. 48. 9; xix. 98. 4; Theophrastus, *Hist. Plant.* ii. 6. 8; ix. 6. 1; Dioscorides i. 18.

El-Ghôr, or the Rift.[1] But Josephus twice gives it the name of the 'Great Plain,' which he also applies to Esdraelon.[2]

A large part of this valley is of exuberant fertility, and, as we shall presently see, the whole of it might be cultivated. The Jordan itself runs in too deep a channel to be easily useful for irrigation, but a number of its affluents from both sides offer abundant moisture during the greater part of the year. Some of these springs and brooks, rising far below the level of the ocean, and in soil impregnated with chlorides and sodium, are bitter and often warm. In many parts there are mounds and ridges of grey marl, salt and greasy, with stretches of gravel, sand, clay, and other *débris* of an old sea-bottom, that assume the weirdest shapes, and give a desolate aspect to the vale. But notwithstanding all this poison, vegetation is extremely rank, especially in spring. The heat is of a forcing-house. Wherever water comes, the flowers rise to the knee, and herbage often to the shoulder.[3] The drier stretches are covered by broom or intricate thorn-bush ; by all the streams there are brakes of cane and oleander. The streams dash violently down to the Jordan, tearing up the surface of the country by their spring floods and heaping across flowers and grass the

Fertility of the Ghôr.

[1] الغور.

[2] Once in its whole extent, iv. *Wars*, viii. 2 : τὸ μέγα πεδίον καλεῖται ἀπὸ κώμης Γινναβρὶν (at the south end of the Lake of Galilee) διῆκον μέχρι τῆς Ἀσφαλτίτιδος λίμνης ; and once at Jericho, iv. *Antt.* vi. 1, ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰορδάνην κατὰ τὸ μέγα πεδίον Ἱεριχοῦντος ἀντικρύ. It is probably to the Jordan Valley that the same name refers in 1 Macc. v. 52, though it may be the beginning of Esdraelon that is meant. It was, perhaps, in such an ambiguity that the name was transferred from Esdraelon, which it wholly suits, to the Jordan Valley, that is not so accurately described by it. In 1 Macc. xvi. 11, τὸ πεδίον Ἱεριχώ.

[3] Conder, *T. W.* 225-228.

loosened marl and the ruin of cane-brake. Swamps abound, and there is much malaria. Towards Jericho the vegetation grows less and less rank—a plain of thorn-groves with a swamp or two, and then the ground breaks away, discoloured or crusted with salt, and bearing only a few succulent plants, to the shingly beach and blue waters of the Dead Sea. Although there is so much fertility, the stretches of sour soil, the unhealthy jungle, the obtrusive marl, and the parched hillsides out of reach of the streams, justify the Hebrew name of the 'Arabah or Desert.[1] In the New Testament also the Valley is called a Wilderness.[2]

The Pride of Jordan.

Down this broad valley there curves and twists a deeper, narrower bed—perhaps 150 feet deeper,[3] and from 200 yards to a mile broad. Its banks are mostly of white marl, and within these it is packed with tamarisks and other semi-tropical trees and tangled bush. To those who look down from the hills along any great stretch of the valley, this Zôr, as it is called, trails and winds like an enormous green serpent, more forbidding in its rankness than any open water could be, however foul or broken. This jungle marks the Jordan's wider bed, the breadth to which the river rises when in flood. In the Old Testament it appears as the *Pride of Jordan*, and always as a symbol of trouble and danger. *Though in a land of peace thou be secure, what wilt thou do in the Pride of Jordan? He shall come up like a lion from the Pride of Jordan.*[4] It was long supposed that this referred to the spring floods of the river, and it

[1] ערבה also in the plural in connection with certain districts. The 'Araboth of Moab and of Jericho.

[2] Mark i. cf. 4 and 5.

[3] Conder reckons 150 feet deeper at Beisan, *T. W.* 215; and 200 feet at Jericho, *ib.* 216.

[4] Jer. xii. 5; xlix. 19; l. 44.

is given in the English version as *swelling*, but the word means *pride*, and as one text speaks of the *pride of Jordan being spoiled*,[1] the phrase most certainly refers to the jungle, whose green serpentine ribbon looks so rich from the hills above. In that case we ought to translate it the *luxuriance* or *rankness* of Jordan. Though lions have ceased from the land, this jungle is still a covert for wild beasts, and Jeremiah's contrast of it with a *land of peace* is even more suitable to a haunted jungle than to an inundation. But it is floods which have made the rankness, they fill this wider bed of Jordan every year;[2] and the floor of the jungle is covered with deposits of mud and gravel, with dead weed, driftwood and the exposed roots of trees.

Penetrating this unhealthy hollow you come soon to the Jordan itself. Remember that it is but a groove in the bottom of an old sea-bed, a ditch as deep below the level of the ocean as some of our coal-mines are, and you will be prepared for the uncouthness of the scene. There is no yellow marl by the river itself. Those heaps and ridges, which in higher parts of the valley look like nothing but the refuse of a chemical manufactory, have here all been washed away. But there are hardly less ugly mudbanks, from two to twenty-five feet high, with an occasional bed of shingle, that is not clean and sparkling as in our own rivers, but foul with ooze and slime. Dead driftwood is everywhere in sight. Large trees lie about, overthrown: and the exposed roots and lower trunks of the trees still standing are smeared

The river-bed.

[1] Zech. xi. 3.

[2] *Jordan overfloweth his banks all the time of harvest*, i.e. in April, Josh. iii. iv. 'Abound as Jordan in the time of harvest,' Ecclesiasticus xxiv. 26.

with mud, except where they have been recently torn by passing wreckage. There are, however, some open spaces, where the river flashes to the hills above and an easy path is possible to its edge. But in the lower reaches this is mostly where the earth is too salt to sustain vegetation, and so it may be said that the Jordan sweeps to the Dead Sea through unhealthy jungle relieved only by poisonous soil.

The river itself is from 90 to 100 feet broad, a rapid, muddy water with a zigzag current. The depth varies from 3 feet at some fords[1] to as much as 10 or 12. In the sixty-five miles the descent is 610 feet, or an average of 9 feet a mile—not a great fall, for the Spey, and the Dee from Balmoral to Aberdeen both average about 14 feet a mile. But near the Lake of Galilee the fall is over 40 feet a mile,[2] and this impetus given to a large volume of water, down a channel in which it cannot sprawl, and few rocks retard, induces a great rapidity of current. This has given the river its name: Jordan means the Down-comer. The swiftness is rendered more dangerous by the muddy bed and curious zigzag current which will easily sweep a man from the side into the centre of the stream. In April, as we have seen, the waters rise to the wider bed, but for the most part of the year they keep to the channel of 90 feet. Here, with infrequent interruptions of shingle, mostly silent and black in spite of its speed, but now and then breaking into praise and whitening into foam, Jordan scours along, muddy

The river.

[1] M. Le Strange crossed after heavy rain at a ford near Beisan, where the water 'scarcely reached the bellies of the horses.' *A Ride through Ajlun*, etc., appended to Schumacher's *Across the Jordan*.

[2] Conder, *T. W.* 215.

between banks of mud, careless of beauty, careless of life, intent only upon its own work, which for ages by the decree of the Almighty has been that of separation.

Most rivers, in valleys so wide and well watered, mean the presence of great cities, or at least of much cultivation. But the valley of the Jordan never seems to have been a populous place.[1] Some towns were built in it, and gardens were numerous. Jericho, we have seen,[2] was a very flourishing region, especially in the hands of the Romans who knew how to irrigate. There seems to have been a continuous forest of palms all the way hence to Phasaelis.[3] Farther up the valley at Kurawa, there are fertile fields, and the richness of the country round Bethshan is evident.[4] The whole of this side of the valley was famed, throughout the ancient world, for its corn, dates, balsam,[5] flax and other products.[6] The early Christian pilgrims also lavish praise: the Arab geographers of the eighth to the twelfth centuries imply that there is still fertility in the Ghôr. They speak especially of the sugar of Bethshan and Kurawa; and the Crusaders found sugar growing in Jericho.[7] On the eastern side of the valley there was the large town of

Fertility and population of the valley.

[1] Cf. Pliny, *H.N.* v. 15: 'accolis invitum se praebet.'

[2] Ch. xiii. p. 266. [3] See p. 354. [4] Josephus.

[5] Cf. Le Strange, *op. cit.* 270.

[6] Polybius, v. 70, says that the district between Bethshan and the Lake of Galilee could support an army, and there we know Vespasian settled his Legions. On the balsam, Diodorus Siculus ii. 48. 9, xix. 98. 4. Dioscorides i. 18. On the dates and general fertility of Jericho, Archelais and Phasaelis, Pliny, *H.N.* v. 15 (14), Strabo xvi. ii. 41. For the linen of Bethshan, etc., the anonymous *Totius Orbis Descriptio* in the *Geogr. Gr. minores*, Ed. Müller, ii. 513 ff.

[7] Cf. Le Strange's *Pal. under Moslem*, 53. Rey, *Les Colon. Franques*, p. 386. The name 'sugar-mills' still attaches to some ruins at Jericho.

Livias or Julias opposite Jericho,[1] immediately north of that some smaller towns, with the city of Adam perhaps at the present Tell Damieh and Succoth at Tell Der'ala, but after these, till the Yarmuk is reached, nothing except some nameless villages,—unless Pella, which lay on the first terraces above the Valley, be reckoned to the latter. The great number of mounds, some of which have been found to consist of sun-dried bricks,[2] are probably the remains not of cities but of old brick-fields. The clay of the Jordan Valley was good for moulding, and Solomon placed in it his brass foundries for the building of the Temple.[3] But, from this absence of cities on the east of the Jordan, it must not be supposed that the land is not cultivable. Between the Yarmuk and Pella, sufficient streams break from Gilead to irrigate the whole region, the remains of ancient aqueducts are visible, and even, without elaborate irrigation, the few small villages reap to-day good harvests of grain.[4] All up the east of the river, you come across patches of cultivation, the property of various Bedawee tribes on the

[1] On the site of Beth-haram or Beth-haran (Josh. xiii. 27; Num. xxxii. 36) the βηθαράμφθᾶ of Josephus (ii. *Wars*, iv. 2) where Herod had a palace; βηθραμφθά, according to Euseb. but Jerome spells Betharam (*Onomasticon*). He says it was called Livias by Herod, *i.e.* Antipas, in honour of the wife of Augustus, but Josephus states that its name was Julias (xviii. *Antt.* ii. 1; ii. *Wars*, ix. 1). Livias was the older name, as the Emperor's wife was received into the gens Julia only by his testament (see Schürer, *Hist.* II. i. 142). Placidus, a lieutenant of Vespasian, held it in 68 f. (iv. *Wars*, vii. 6; viii. 2). Theodosius, A.D. 530, *De Situ Terrae Sanctae*, 65 (*P.P.T.* p. 14) describes it as twelve miles from Jericho near warm springs. He also calls it Livias. It is the present Tell er-Rameh.

[2] By Sir Charles Warren. See Conder, *T. W.* 220, 221.

[3] This was, of course, in the west of Jordan at Zarthan, 1 Kings vii. 46. צרתן probably the Zarthan of Josh. iii. 16, beside the city of Adam.

[4] We passed over this district in 1891, and were surprised at the many signs of cultivation, the great piles of corn in the few villages, and the old aqueducts; cf. *Pella*, 18, 19.

highlands to the east.[1] The dews are as heavy as in other parts of the land: the heat is tropical. The 'Arabah, then, in spite of its name, was once very largely cultivated, and by simple methods of irrigation, drawn from the affluents of the Jordan, might again become a rich and fruitful land.[2] The opening of the railway to Bethshan may be the beginning of another era, like that in which the fame of the fruits of the Jordan went out over the world.[3] Under a good Government dates, rice, sugar, flax, cotton and many more commodities might be grown in great abundance.

Why, then, have towns always been so few in the valley? and why has it so much deserved the name of wilderness? The reasons are three. From early spring to late autumn the heat is intolerable, and parches all vegetation not constantly watered. At Pella and opposite Jericho we found the temperature in July at 104°; it has been known to rise in August to 118°.[4] The Arabs of the Ghôr, the Ghawârineh, are a sickly and degenerate race. It is not to be wondered at, that the Israelites who possessed the hills on either side should prefer to build their cities there, descending to the valley only for the purposes of sowing and reaping their harvests. This is what many Samarian villages now do,[5] as well as the Bedouin of Moab and the peasants of Gilead.

The great heat.

[1] For the northern end, see Schumacher, *The Jaulân*, p. 148. The 'Adwan cultivate, or have cultivated for them, some parts of the southern valley. When we visited their main camp near Heshbon, 'Ali Diab, their chief, with a number of the men were absent securing their grain in the Jordan Valley.

[2] Cf. Le Strange, *op. cit.* 270.

[3] The present Sultan of Turkey has bought, for his private estate, a very large part of the valley. We met his servants in several parts of it.

[4] Conder, *T.W.*

[5] Cf. Robinson, *L.R.* So we found with the 'Adwan Bedouin.

Again, in ancient times the valley was infested with wild beasts. The extirpation of these formed one of the most serious difficulties in Israel's conquest of the country.[1] But their covert and stronghold was the jungle of the Jordan; driven from the rest of the land they were secure here, and bred so fast that, as soon as any of the neighbouring provinces was deprived of its population, they quickly overran it.[2] Of these, lions are the most often mentioned in the Old Testament.[3] There are no lions to-day,—the last of them was seen eight hundred years ago,[4]—but wild boars abound, and there are leopards and a kind of wolf.[5]

The wild beasts.

A still more serious hindrance to the settlement of population in the Jordan Valley was the frequency with which it was overrun by the Arabs. There were no towns on the level of Esdraelon; there were none in the 'Arabah, and in both cases for the same reason, that no strong site existed in either of these channels capable of resisting the desert swarms which poured through them. Even the Herods did not attempt to fortify Archelais or Phasaelis, which were only villages; and neither Jericho nor Bethshan ever successfully sustained a siege.

The Arabs.

We must, therefore, seek for the rôle of this valley in history, in another direction than that along which its possible fertility points us. We find it in two functions:

(1) The Jordan was a border and barrier. We have seen

[1] Deut. vii. 22; xxxii. 24; Lev. xxvi. 6, 22; cf. Gen. xxxi. 39, *that which was torn of beasts*; Exod. xxii. 31; Lev. vii. 24; xvii. 15; xxii. 8; Amos v. 19; Hosea ii. 18; xiii. 7 f.; Isa. xi. 6 f., etc.

[2] 2 Kings xvii. 25.

[3] *Ibid.*; Jer. xlix. 19.

[4] Many early pilgrims speak of them; the last was the Abbot Daniel, 1100.

[5] Conder saw a wolf, *T. W.*

how the river itself tells us this by the depth of its valley, its unuseful, unlovely course, its muddy banks and their rank jungle. And so we find it appreciated in literature. With few exceptions the references to Jordan in the Old Testament are geographical and prosaic; the Psalmist hears in it no music; the prophet speaks only of its rankness and danger; it excites the ridicule of those who know its sister Syrian rivers;[1] the exiles by Babel's streams think not upon Jordan's rush of water but upon the arid Jerusalem; and when a symbol is needed of the water of life the Psalmist ignores his country's only river, and floods for his purpose the dry bed of the Kedron.[2] Jordan was only a boundary, a line to traverse, and, in nearly all of the texts in which the name occurs, it is governed by a preposition, *unto*, *over*, *across*.[3]

Jordan in the Old Testament.

It is difficult to estimate the military value of such a frontier. Like other border rivers the Jordan has been often and easily crossed, but, unlike them, there do not appear to have been—below the Lake of Galilee at least—any serious attempts to defend it. In the time of the Judges the fords were watched to prevent the escape of fugitives,[4] and once the Maccabees had a battle on the river.[5] But, in the greatest invasion of all, Israel crossed unopposed, and in her turn offered no

As a military frontier.

[1] 2 Kings iv.

[2] *There is a river whose streams do glad the city of our God*, Ps. xlvi.

[3] Jordan as a border, Gen. xxxii. 10; Deut. iii. 20; xxvii. 4; Josh. i. 2; Num. xxxiv. 10-12. It is Ezekiel's border, xlvii. 18.

[4] Judges vii. 24, by Ephraim against Midian; xii. 5, by Gilead against Ephraim.

[5] *Circa* 160; 1 Macc. ix. 32-49. The tactics are not clear. The fight seems to have been on the west bank, and the only use of the river was that made by the Jewish troops in swimming it so as to escape from the Syrians.

opposition on Jordan either to Syrians, who came over just below the lake, or to Arabs or Moabites farther south. David did not seek to check Absalom's crossing, nor the Byzantines that of the Arabs, nor the Crusaders that of Saladin, nor Napoleon that of the Turks.[1] Nor was the Arab drift into Western Palestine ever checked by the river, but only by a settled government to the east of it. In short, at no period whatsoever has the eastern defence of the land been laid down along Jordan ; nor has the river been always a boundary between different states. Northern Israel lay on both sides of it, and in later days Perea was counted with Judæa. Is then the frontier influence of Jordan entirely a reflection of the spiritual symbolism to which subsequent events exalted the river? This can hardly be said to be so in face of the following facts. Moses dreaded the separation that Jordan would cause between the tribes left to the east of it and those who crossed.[2] To early Israel the crossing of Jordan was as great a crisis as the crossing of the Red Sea.[3] When David was made King in Hebron, it was Eastern Palestine which Abner chose for the rallying of Israel round Saul's house,[4] and David himself fled there when Absalom raised Judah against him.[5] There are a hundred other passages in the Old Testament, taken from the everyday speech of the people, which prove how separating an influence they felt in that deep gulf with its super-

[1] That is below the Lake of Galilee. On the north, where the Turks had crossed by the Jisr Benât Jakob and besieged Safed, Murat raised the siege and drove them across the river again, and on the south all the fighting was done west of Jordan, at the heights of Lubieh and then on Esdraelon. The Turkish army, however, was cut off from Damascus after it crossed Jordan, and found a new base at Nablus.

[2] Num. xxxii. 6 ff.

[3] Ps. cxiv. 3, etc.

[4] 2 Sam. ii. 8 ff.

[5] *Id.* xv., xvi.

heated airs, its jungle and its rapid river.[1] And we have but to compare the Jordan with another river which flows in a line with itself, the Orontes, to see that, from whatever reason, the former was a real, effective frontier between the nomad and the agriculturist, between east and west, to a degree never reached by the latter. Perhaps this effectiveness did not consist so much in shutting out invaders from the East as in giving to such of them as drifted over the river a visible and impressive reason why they should not return. All down Israel's history it is certain that the people knew themselves to be cut off from the East, that their land felt under them no more a part of Arabia, and that they themselves trod it with the consciousness of another and a higher destiny than that of the Arab tribes from whom they finally broke away when they *passed over Jordan*. In this moral effect upon the national consciousness the Jordan and its strange valley exerted an influence, beside which mere military strength, if it had been present, would have been quite insignificant.

(2) Jordan has not only been associated with the figures of two of Israel's greatest prophets—Elijah and John the Baptist—but with the bestowal, at their hands, of the Spirit upon their successors.

Elijah and Elisha on Jordan.

We are not to be surprised that as his end approached Elijah should feel himself driven towards that border, across which he had first burst so mysteriously upon Israel,[2] and to which he had withdrawn while waiting for his word to accomplish

[1] The frequency of the phrase *across Jordan*, and such names as the Mountains of the 'Abarim, *i.e. Those on the other side.*

[2] He was from Thisbe, undiscovered, in Gilead. In I Kings xvii. I read with the LXX. and Hebrew text, *Elijahû the Tishbite from Tis hbê of Gilea*

itself.[1] Stage by stage he came down from the high centre of the land to its lowest, lonely, crumbling shelves.[2] *Tarry here, I pray thee, for the Lord hath sent me to Beth-el . . . to Jericho . . . to Jordan.* But at each stage Elisha said, *As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee*; and when the little communities of prophets came out and said, *Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head to-day?* he answered, *I also know it, hold ye your peace.* So these two, leaving the sons of the prophets behind, passed down the falling land as the great planets pass to their setting through the groups of lesser stars. The mountains of The-Other-Side filled the view ahead of them, and in these mountains lay the sepulchre of Moses. He, who in his helplessness had already fled for new inspiration to Horeb, could not fail to wonder whether God was to lay him to rest beside his forerunner on Nebo. In front there was no promised land visible—nothing but that high sky-line eastward with the empty heaven above it. Behind there was no nation waiting to press into the future—nothing but that single follower who persisted in following to the end. And so, the story tells us, the end came. The river that had drawn back at a nation's feet, parted at the stroke of one man, and as he suddenly passed away to the God from whom he had suddenly come, it was one man whom he acknowledged as his heir, and to whom he left his spirit. Realise these

[1] 1 Kings xvii. 3, *Turn thee eastward and hide thyself by the brook Kĕrîth, which is on face of Jordan.* This last phrase, which in conformity with Hebrew terms of orientation, we must translate *east of Jordan*, excludes the Wady Kelt behind Jericho, and Kĕrîth must be sought for in Gilead, where, however, the name has not yet been discovered.

[2] 2 Kings ii. The Gilgal is not that beside Jericho, but that near the high road between Bethel and Shechem, the present Jiljilia, 2441 feet above the sea and over 3700 above Jordan.

two lonely figures standing in that unpeopled wilderness, the state invisible, the Church left behind in impotent gaze and wonder, and nothing passing between these two men except from the one the tribute to personal worth, and from the other the influence of personal spirit and force—realise all this on the lonely bank of Jordan, and you understand the beginnings of prophecy—the new dispensation in which the instrument of the Most High was to be not the State and its laws, not the army and its victories, not even the Church and her fellowship, but the spirit of the individual man. Not in vain does the story tell us that it was with his mantle, symbol above all things of the Prophet, that Elijah smote the waters, and that Elisha smote them the second time on his return to his ministry. Jordan, that had owned the People of God, owns now the Prophet.

Elisha is represented as the first in Israel to employ the river for sacramental purposes. He said unto Naaman the leper, *Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean.* We do not again read of Jordan being thus used.

John the Baptist in Jordan.

(3) It must have been these two events which determined John the Baptist's choice of the theatre of his ministry. He found here both of his requisites, solitude and much water. He found also those vivid figures of his preaching—the slimy shingle, of which he said, *God is able to raise up of these stones children to Abraham*; the trees with *the axe laid to their roots*, for the Jordan jungle was a haunt of woodcutters;[1] and, on the higher stretches of the valley, the fires among the dry scrub chasing before them the scorpions and vipers.[2] But chiefly

[1] Cf. 2 Kings vi. 1 ff.

[2] Cf. on some of these and others, Stanley, *Sin. and Pal.*

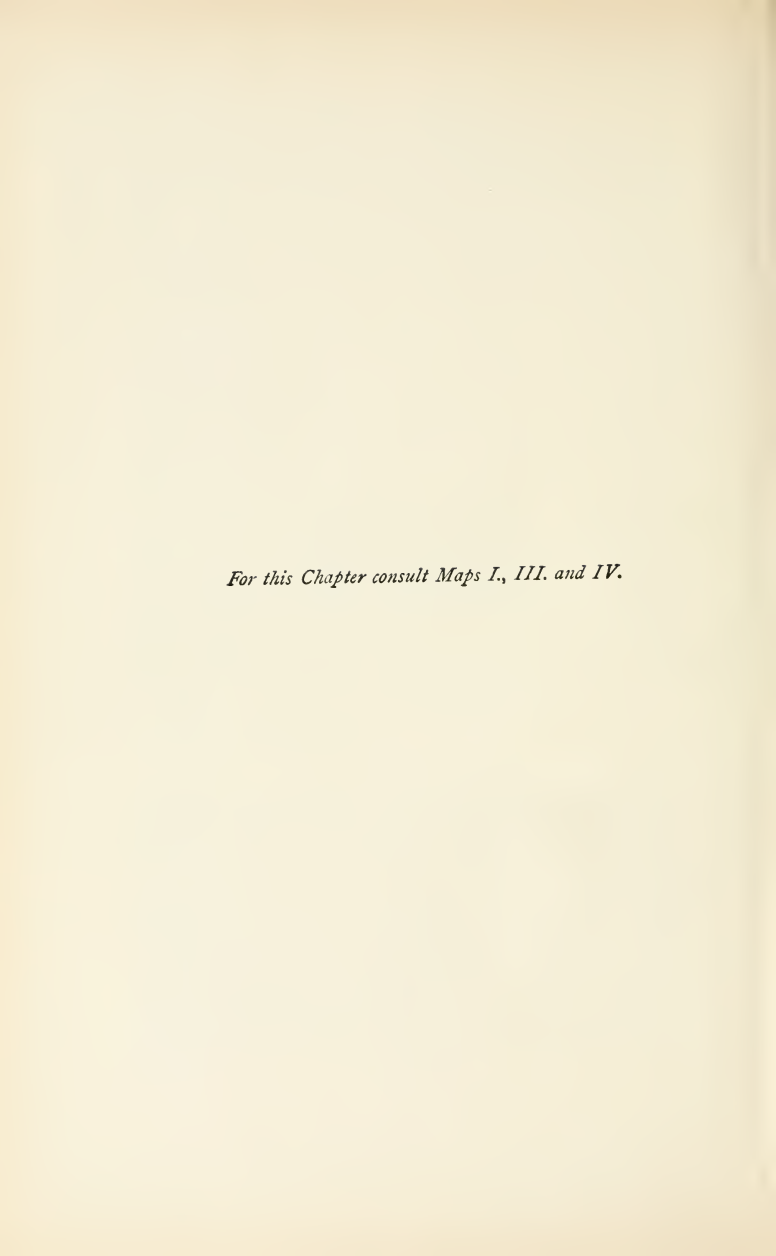
must it have been the memories of Elijah and Elisha which came upon John and the crowds that listened to him. Israel's only river had by these prophets been consecrated to the two acts most symbolic of religion—the washing by water and the gift of the Spirit. And now where Elisha bade Naaman bathe his leprosy away, John called on Israel to wash and be clean: where Elijah bequeathed his spirit, ere he was lifted from earth, John, too, towards the close of his ministry, was to meet and own his successor. But it was no Elisha who came to take his sign from this second Elijah. *There cometh He that is mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose. I indeed have baptized you with water, but He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost. . . . And Jesus was baptized of John in Jordan, and straightway coming up out of the water he saw the heavens rending, and the Spirit, like a dove, descending upon Him; and there came a voice from heaven, Thou art My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*[3]

And so what was never a great Jewish river has become a very great Christian one.

[1] The place of our Saviour's baptism is quite uncertain. The traditional site is at the Makhadet Hajle. The Bethabara, where the Baptist is said by some MSS. of the Gospel of John (i. 28) to have been baptizing about the time that Jesus came to him, is placed by Conder at the ford 'Abarah, just north of Beisan (*T. W.* 230). But it must be kept in mind that a name like that, meaning *ferry*, or *crossing*, or *ford* (see p. 337), probably occurred more than once down the river. The other, and more authentic reading, Bethany, is offered by Conder as a proof of the nearness of the place of baptism to Bashan. There is, however, no argument, only a suggestion. On the other hand, the proofs which the author of *Supernatural Religion* bases on the word Bethany against the Evangelist's knowledge of Palestine only reveal his own ignorance both of the possibilities of the country in which many Bethanys may easily have lain, and of the rest of the Gospel, the writer of which expressly states that he knew the other Bethany near Jerusalem (xi. 18).

CHAPTER XXIII

THE DEAD SEA



For this Chapter consult Maps I., III. and IV.

THE DEAD SEA

PERHAPS there is no region of our earth where Nature and History have more cruelly conspired, where so tragic a drama has obtained so awful a theatre. In many other parts of the world the effect of historical catastrophes has been heightened by their occurrence amid scenes of beauty and peace. It is otherwise here. Nature, when she has not herself been, by some volcanic convulsion, the executioner of God's judgments, has added every aggravation of horror to the cruelty of the human avenger or the exhaustion of the doomed. The history of the Dead Sea opens with Sodom and Gomorrah, and may be said to close with the Massacre of Masada.

The Dead Sea valley.

The previous chapter has described the formation of the Jordan Valley, by the enclosure of a bit of the ocean-bed, between two great folds of the earth's surface, and by a subsequent depression to the present great depth below the level of the sea. Of this extraordinary Rift or Sink, as it might fitly be called, the Dead Sea occupies the fifty-three deepest miles, with an average breadth of nine to ten. The surface is 1290 feet below the level of the Mediterranean, but the bottom is as deep again, soundings having been taken to 1300 feet. This is at the north-east corner, under the hills of Moab, and not far from the entrance of the Jordan; thence the bed shelves rapidly upwards, till the whole of the south end

of the sea is only from 8 to 14 feet in depth.[1] These figures, however, vary from year to year, and after a very rainy season the sea will be even as much as 15 feet deeper, and at the southern end more than a mile longer.[2]

The Dead Sea receives, besides the Jordan, four or five smaller streams, but has no issue or relief for its waters, except through evaporation. This is raised to enormous proportions by the fervent heat which prevails in the sunken valley during the greater part of the year. The extracted moisture usually forms a haze impenetrable to the eye for more than a few miles, but sometimes vast columns of mist rear themselves from the sea, heavy clouds are formed above, and thunder-storms, the more violent for their narrow confines, rage, as the torn coasts testify, with lightning and floods of rain. To the everlasting evaporation is due the bitterness of the sea. All rivers contain some salts, and all lakes without issue to the ocean become, in consequence, more or less briny. But the streams which feed the Dead Sea are unusually saline; they flow through nitrous soil, and they are fed by sulphurous springs. Chemicals, too, have been found in the water of the sea, which are not traceable in its tributaries, and probably are introduced by hot springs in the sea bottom.[3] Along the shores are deposits of sulphur and petroleum

The saltness of the Sea.

[1] The western side is, as a rule, much shallower than the eastern. A few years ago the south end was fordable even as far north as the Lisân (Burckhardt, *Travels*; Robinson, *B.R.* ii.). This and the submergence of an old jetty at the north end prove that for a long time the volume of the sea has been increasing. (See p. 471.)

[2] Robinson, *B.R.* ii. 672, says that after heavy rain the marshes at the south end of the Dead Sea are covered by water to the extent of two or three miles.

[3] *E.g.*, Bromine. Burckhardt was told that at the former ford across the sea the bottom waters felt warm to the feet.

springs. The surrounding strata are rich in bituminous matter, and after earthquakes lumps of bitumen are so often found floating on the water as to justify its ancient name of Asphaltitis.[1] At the south-east end a ridge of rock-salt, 300 feet high, runs for five miles, elsewhere there are deep saline deposits, and the bed of the sea appears to be covered with salt crystals.[2] To all these solid ingredients, then, precipitated and concentrated by the constant evaporation, the Dead Sea owes its extreme bitterness and buoyancy. While the water of the ocean contains from 4 to 6 per cent. of solids in solution, the Dead Sea holds from 24 to 26 per cent., or five times as much.[3] The water is very nauseous to the taste and oily to the touch, leaving on the skin, when it dries, a thick crust of salt. But it is very brilliant. Seen from far away no lake on earth looks more blue and beautiful. Swim out upon it, and at a depth of 20 feet you can

[1] Bitumen is petroleum hardened by evaporation and oxidation. Dawson, *Mod. Science in Bible Lands*, 487 f. The bituminous limestone, which burns like bright coal (cf. Burckhardt, *Syria*, 394), is the so-called Dead-Sea stone from which articles are made and offered for sale in Jerusalem and Bethlehem. The floating lumps probably are from petroleum springs in the sea-bed. These springs were evidently more common in ancient times than now. Gen. xiv. 10 says the Vale of Siddim was *wells, wells, i.e.* full of wells, of bitumen, בארות בארות חמר. The Arabs still call the bitumen ḥommar, حمر Burckhardt, *Syria*, 394; Strabo xvi. 2. 42; Diod. Sic. ii. 48; xix. 98; Josephus (iv. *Wars*, viii. 4) and Pliny (*H.N.* v. 16) describe the sea as ejecting bitumen or asphalt. See also the following modern travellers: Burckhardt, *Syria*, 394; Robinson, *B.R.* ii. 228-230. In the earthquakes of 1834 and 1837 large masses of bitumen were cast ashore; Lynch, *Narrative*, 303; etc., etc.

[2] The salt ridge is the Jebel, or Hashm, Usdum, see Robinson, *B.R.* ii. 206 ff. 481. The Arabs take salt from this and from the Lisân on the other side. All dredging brings up crystals of salts.

[3] Hull (work cited below) gives for the Atlantic 6 lbs. of salt in 100 of water, for the Dead Sea, 24·57. Cf. the sets of analyses in Robinson, *B.R.* ii. 224, by Dr. Marcet, Gay-Lussac, etc., and by Hull, *P.E.F. Survey Mem. Geol.* p 121.

count the pebbles through the transparent waters. The buoyancy of the Dead Sea is well known; it is difficult to sink the limbs deep enough for swimming; if you throw a stick on the surface, it seems to rest there as on a mirror, so little of it actually penetrates the water. The surface is generally smooth, the heavy water rises not easily; but when in storm it does rise, the waves are immensely powerful. Lieutenant Lynch describes them beating on the bow of his boat like the blows of a sledge-hammer.[1] No fish can exist in the waters, nor is it proved that any low forms of life have been discovered.[2]

These bitter and imprisoned waters, that are yet so blue and brilliant, chafe a low beach of gravel, varied by marl or salted marsh. Twice on the western side the mountain cliffs come down to the water's edge, and on the eastern coast there is a curious peninsula called El-Lisân, or The Tongue, though the shape is more that of a spurred boot. This is formed of steep banks of marl, from forty to sixty feet high,[3] that

The sea-beach.

[1] On the water of the Dead Sea, see *P.E.F. Geolog. Memoir* by Hull, pt. v. ch. i.; Dawson, *Mod. Science in Bible Lands*, 472 ff.; Lartet, *Le Mer Morte*; Lynch, *Narrative*.

[2] On my first visit I found on the north shore some fish swimming in a small pool that was separated from the sea only by a bar of gravel two feet wide, and was almost indistinguishable in taste. Yet when they were put into the sea they gasped a few times and turned over dead. Galen, *de Simpl. Med.* iv. c. 19 (quoted by Reland): *φαίνεται ἐν ἐκείνῳ τῷ ὕδατι μήτε ζῶον ἐγγιγνόμενόν τι, μήτε φυτόν.* The story that birds cannot fly over the sea ('neque pisces aut suetas aquis volucres patitur;' Tacitus, *Hist.* v. 6), is, of course, legendary. Robinson remarks that the absence of water-fowl is due to the absence of fish, *B.R.* 226. The multitude of shells are not land-shells, and cannot be explained as having all come down the Jordan and other streams. Perhaps they date from the time that the sea was a fresh-water lake. See p. 470.

[3] Lynch, *Narrative*, p. 297: 'A bold, broad promontory, from 40 to 60 feet high, . . . a broad margin of sand at its foot, incrusted with salt and bitumen, the perpendicular face extending all round, and presenting the coarse and chalky appearance of recent carbonate of lime.'

shine over the blue waters like the long white walls of an iceberg. Everywhere else is the gravel, as clean and fair in appearance as the waters which lave it. But the gravel is crowned with an almost constant hedge of driftwood, every particle of which is stripped of bark and bleached, while much of it glitters with salt. You could not imagine a more proper crown for Death. With this the brilliant illusion of the Dead Sea fades, and everywhere beyond, to the far heights of the surrounding hills, violence and desolation reign supreme. If the coast is flat you have salt-pans, or a briny swamp; if terraced, there is a yellow, scurfy stretch of soil, with a few thorn-bushes and succulent weeds. Ancient beaches of the sea are visible all round it, steep banks from five to fifty feet of stained and greasy marl, very friable, with heaps of rubbish at their feet, and crowned by nothing but their own bare, crumbling brows. Some hold that these gave the region its ancient name, the Vale of Siddim;[1] and in truth, it is they which chiefly haunt one's memory of the Dead Sea. Last crumbling shelves of the upper world, there are not in nature more weird symbols of forsakenness and desolation.

The surrounding hills.

Behind these terraces of marl the mountains rise precipitous and barren on either coast. To the east the long range of Moab, at a height of 2500 to 3000 feet above the shore, is broken only by the great valley of the Arnon. The tawny limestone cliffs,

[1] Conder, *T. W.*, p. 208, says the local name for these terraces is 'sidd.' From the meaning of the root שׂדד = to level, שִׂדִּים has been taken in the sense of level fields (Aq. Onk, etc.). The LXX. confesses ignorance by translating *φάραγξ ἡ ἁλυκή*). The Arabic in several forms means to level, but also to obstruct. One derived noun, 'sudd,' pl. 'sidadât,' signifies a 'hollow containing rocks, stones, and stagnant rain-water' (Freytag), and Gesenius takes the Hebrew to be something equivalent.

capped with softer chalk, and streaked with marl, but blotted here and there by an outcrop of basalt or black limestone, stand near enough to the coast to be reflected in the still water, and at sunset, losing their spots, glow one uniform amethyst above the exceeding blue. In all Judæa there is no view like this one, as you see it across the wilderness from the Mount of Olives. On the western coast the hills touch the water at two points, but elsewhere leave between themselves and the sea the shore already described, sometimes a hundred yards in breadth, sometimes a mile and a half. From behind the highest terrace of marl the hills themselves rise precipitously in cliffs from 2000 to 2500 feet. No such valley cuts them as Arnon cuts the opposite range, but every three or four miles they are pierced by a narrow gorge, which continues in a broad gully through the marl terraces to the sea. These gorges are barren, except in their rocky beds, the only ways of passage up them, where a few trees live on the water that trickles out of sight beneath the grey shingle. Otherwise, except at Engedi, the western range is bare, unbroken, menacing; and there are few places in the world where the sun beats with so fierce a heat.[1] Beyond this rocky barrier stretches Jeshimon, or *Devastation*, the wilderness of Judæa, which we have already traversed.[2]

History on the Dead Sea.

In this awful hollow, this bit of the infernal regions come up to the surface, this hell with the sun shining into it, primitive man laid the scene of God's most terrible judgment on human sin. The glare of Sodom and Gomorrah is flung down the whole length of Scripture history. It is the popular and standard judg-

[1] For Engedi. see pp. 269 ff.

[2] See pp. 312 ff.

ment of sin. The story is told in Genesis; it is applied in Deuteronomy, by Amos, by Isaiah, by Jeremiah, by Zephaniah, in Lamentations, and by Ezekiel.[1] Our Lord Himself employs it more than once as the figure of the judgment He threatens upon cities where the word is preached in vain, and there we feel the flame scorch our own cheeks.[2] Paul, Peter, Jude, all make mention of it.[3] In the Apocalypse the great city of sin is *spiritually called Sodom.*[4]

The Cities of the Plain.

The cities were five: Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboiim, and Bela or Zoar.[5] They lay on the floor of the Jordan Valley, after the name of which they were called *Cities of the Kikkar, or Circle.*[6] But exactly where, we cannot tell. Though the glare of this catastrophe burns still, the ruins it left have entirely disappeared, and there remains in the valley almost no authentic trace of the names it has torn and scattered to infamy across the world. There is a much-debated but insoluble question whether the narratives in Genesis intend to place the cities

[1] Gen. xix.; Deut. xxix. 23, cf. xxxii. 32; Amos iv. 11; Isaiah i. 9 f., iii. 9, cf. xiii. 19; Jer. xxiii. 14, xlix. 18, l. 40; Zeph. ii. 9; Lam. iv. 6; Ezek. xvi. 46, 49, 53, 55.

[2] Matt. x. 15, xi. 24; Mark vi. 11; Luke x. 12, xvii. 29.

[3] Rom. ix. 29, quoting Isa. i. 9; 2 Peter ii. 6; Jude 7.

[4] Rev. xi. 8.

[5] Gen. xiv. 2. Sodom = סְדֹם, LXX. *Σόδομα*, in the Arab tradition سدوم. Gomorra=עֲמֹרָה, *Γόμοῤῥα*, عمورا. Admah=אַדְמָה, *Ἀδαμά*, ادموتا. Zeboim=צְבֹיִם, or צבוים, or צבאים, *Σεβωείμ*, سبوانيم, or صابورا. Zoar=צֹעַר or צוֹעַר, *Σηγώρ*, *Σόγορ*, صاعورا.

[6] In our English version Cities of the Plain, but כִּכָּר=circle. הַכִּכָּר is used alone in Gen. xiii. 12, xix. 17, 29; Deut. xxxiv.; 2 Sam. xviii. 23; but the fuller phrase, כִּכַּר הַיַּרְדֵּן, the Circle of Jordan, in Gen. xiii. 10, 1 Kings vii. 46, cf. Matt. iii. 5.

to the north or to the south of the Dead Sea. For the northern site there are these arguments—that Abraham and Lot looked upon the cities from near Bethel,[1] that the name Circle of Jordan is not applicable to the south end of the Dead Sea, that the presence of five cities there is impossible,[2] that the expedition of the Four Kings, as it swept north from Kadesh-Barnea, attacked Hazezon Tamar, which is probably Engedi, *before* it reached the Vale of Siddim and encountered the King of Sodom and his allies;[3] that the name Gomorrah perhaps exists in Tubk 'Amrîyeh, near 'Ain el Feshkah;[4] and that the name of Zoar has been recovered in Tell Shâghûr.[5]

But, on the other hand, at the south end of the Dead Sea there lay throughout Roman and Mediæval times a city called Zoara by the Greeks and Zughar by the Arabs, which was identified by all with the Zoar of Lot.[6] Jebel Usdum is the 'uncontested representative of

[1] Gen. x. cf. v. 3 with v. 10.

[2] Conder, *P.E.F.Q.*, 1886, 139.

[3] Suggested by Conder, but previously by De Saulcy.

[4] Gen. xiv. 7, 8. But see below.

[5] شاغور, first pointed out by Rev. W. F. Birch, and adopted by Conder, *Heth and Moab*, 154. Merrill, *East of Jordan*, 235, prefers the site Ektânu, His argument that the Zoar of the Arab geographers lay to the north of the Dead Sea is met by Le Strange, *Pal. under Moslems*, 286.

[6] Ζωαρά and Ζοώρ in Josephus, iv. *Wars*, viii. 4: 'The Sea of Asphalt reaches to Zoar in Arabia;' cf. i. *Antt.* xi. 4, xiv. *Antt.* i. 4. Ζωαρά in the *Onomasticon*, art. βαλά: 'Still inhabited, lying on the Dead Sea, and holding a garrison of soldiers; the balsam and palm grow by it, proofs of its ancient fertility.' Zughar, spelt also Sughar and Sukar, is mentioned by a number of Arab geographers, whose statements are collected by Le Strange, *Pal. under Moslems*, 286 ff. According to these, it was a station on the great trade route between the Gulf of Akabah and Jericho, one degree of latitude south of Jericho, 'a city of heat near the desert,' 'on the shore of the overwhelming lake. . . . The mountains overhang the town.' 'Near Al Karak, three days' march from Jerusalem, on the Higgâs border.' 'The lake is called after it;' 'the neighbouring people call the town Sakar, *i.e.* Hell; its water is execrable; no place equal to it in evil climate; its people are

Sodom.[1] Hazezon Tamar may be not En-gedi, but the Tamar of Ezekiel, south-west of the Dead Sea.[2] The name Kikkar may surely have been extended to the south of the Dead Sea, just as to-day the Ghôr is continued for a few miles to the south of Jebel Usdum;[3] Jewish and Arab traditions fix on the south; and, finally, the natural conditions are more suitable there than on the north to the descriptions of the region both before and after the catastrophe, for there is still sufficient water and verdure on the eastern side of the Ghôr to suggest *a garden of the Lord*,[4] while the shallow bay and long

black-skinned and thick-set; its waters are hot, even as though the place stood over hell-fire. Its commercial prosperity is, like Bûzrah, on a small scale, and its trade very lucrative;' 'much arable land there;' 'the trade of the place is considerable, and its markets greatly frequented.' The Arab writers identify it with Lot's Zoar. Crusaders knew the place as Segor, but themselves called it Palmer (Will. of Tyre, xxii. 30). M. Clermont Ganneau, *P.E.F.Q.*, 1886, 20, thinks the site may be discovered not far from the Tawahîn es Soukhâr, on the Ghôr es Safieh; and here Major Kitchener, *P.E.F.Q.*, 1884, 216, with plan, found remains of buildings of great antiquity, but none like temples, with the name Khurbet Labrush.

[1] The phrase is Clermont Ganneau's, *P.E.F.Q.*, 1886, 20. Usdum, أسدم, from Sodom, by that common change which has turned Resef into Arsûf, etc. De Saulcy also reports ruins with the name Khurbet Usdum. But we have other proofs that the name Sodom existed here in comparatively recent times. Galen, Bk. iv. *De simplicium medicamentorum facultatibus*, calls certain salts 'salts of Sodom' from 'the mountains surrounding the lake, which are called Sodom (Σοδομα).' At the Council of Nice there was present a Bishop Severus Sodomorum (*Acta Conc. Nic.*); if this reading be correct, then we must suppose that the district south of the Dead Sea still held the name which was there in Galen's time, and is still found. This is so likely, that we can dispense with the explanation offered by Reland, p. 1020.

[2] Knobel, in Gen. xiv. 7; cf. Ezek. xlvii. 19, xlviii. 28.

[3] Robinson, *B.R.* ii. 490, states that the exact point of division between El Ghôr and El 'Arabah is a line of white cliffs which crosses the valley obliquely beyond the flat marshland to the south of the Dead Sea. From there south to Akabah is the 'Arabah; but north to the Lake of Galilee, the Ghôr.

[4] Gen. xiii. 10.

marshes may, better than the ground at the north end of the sea, hide the secret of the overwhelmed cities.[1]

Such is the evidence for the rival sites. We can only wonder at the confidence with which all writers dogmatically decide in favour of one or the other.

The Overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah.

And Jehovah rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah sulphur and fire—from Jehovah, from the heavens—and He overturned those cities, and all the Circle, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground. And Lot's wife looked back as they fled to Zoar and became a pillar of salt. And Abraham looked down upon Sodom and Gomorrah, upon all the land of the Circle, and saw, and, behold, the smoke of the land went up like the smoke of a furnace.[2] Some have identified these words as the description of such an eruption as that of Vesuvius upon Pompeii.[3] But there is no need to invoke the volcano, and those are more in harmony with the narrative, who judge that in this heavily bituminous soil there took place one of those terrible explosions and conflagrations, which have sometimes broken out in the similar

[1] Robinson, *B.R.* ii. 489, describes the Ghôr at the south end of the Dead Sea as 'wholly unsusceptible of cultivation,' except on the eastern side, 'which is covered with shrubs and verdure, like the Plain of Jericho.' The bay is very shallow, and was fordable a few years back (on the ford, see Robinson, *B.R.* ii. p. 234 f.; Lynch, *Narrative*, p. 304 n.). There is nothing to prevent the theory that this end of the Dead Sea was formed much later than the Dead Sea itself. See Robinson, *B.R.* ii. 604.

[2] Gen. xix. 24-28.

[3] Most recently, Fritz Nötling, *Das Todte Meer u. der Untergang von Sodom u. Gomorra*, in the *Deutsches Montagsblatt*, x. Jahrg. Nos. 27, 31, 33 (quoted *Z.D.P.V.* xi. 126), seeks for the cities in the Wady Zerka Ma'in in Moab, and accounts for their overthrow by the eruption of a volcano. In support of this he points to, what he himself has proved, the comparatively recent date of the lava streams on the east of Jordan. But towns in the Wady Zerka Ma'in could not be called cities of the Kikkar, and the phenomena described do not agree with a volcanic eruption.

geology of the oil districts of North America.[1] In such soil great reservoirs of oil and gas are formed, and suddenly discharged by their own pressure or by earthquake. The gas explodes, carrying high up into the air masses of the oil which fall back in fiery rain, and are so inextinguishable that they will float afire on water. Sometimes brine and saline mud are ejected, and over the site of the reservoirs there are tremors and subsidences. Such a phenomenon accounts for all the statements of the narrative.

Historical character of the narrative.

The reality of the narrative, however, has been questioned by many. They have argued that it is simply one of the many legends of overturned or buried cities, with the addition of the local phenomena of the Dead Sea, and of a very much grander moral than has ever been attached to any tale of the kind. But statements of this argument have hitherto been vitiated by three faults. They have been based upon facts that are irrelevant, they have omitted some that are relevant, and they have supposed that critics who maintain the historical truth of the narrative have some subjective or dogmatic reason for doing so. For instance, they appeal to the ease with which legends spring up everywhere of cities sunk beneath lakes or the ocean. But this is not relevant to our narrative, for the striking thing is that, though the presence of the Dead Sea offers every temptation for the adoption of such a legend, it is nowhere in the Bible even suggested that the doomed cities are at the bottom of the sea, but we hear of this first from

[1] Robinson (*B.R.* ii. 606 ff., Letter to Leopold von Buch) suggested the coincidence of volcanic and earthquake action, the stuff from the volcano setting on fire the bitumen released by the earthquake. It is Dawson, *Mod. Science in Bible Lands*, 488 ff., who gives the theory described above.

Josephus.[1] This is surely a proof of the sobriety of the biblical tradition. Again, the arguments against the latter fail to deal with the fact that the phenomena it describes have all happened elsewhere in similar geological formations, and yet are so singular that it is not probable they can have been invented. And, thirdly, so far from its being a dogmatic interest which alone holds some to a belief in the narrative, the facts of the existence of the cities and of their overthrow in the manner described are accepted both by authorities in natural science and by critics of the Old Testament, who have obviously no such interests to serve. The effort to prove the story wholly legend may therefore be said to have failed.[2]

[1] The one verse through which this notion of submergence could be forced on Scripture, only through a wrong interpretation, is Gen. xiv. 3, *the Vale of Siddim, which is the Salt Sea*. But, first, these words do not necessarily identify the Vale and the Sea as coincident; and, second, the verse only gives the Vale of Siddim as the battle-field, not as the site of the cities. Nowhere else in Scripture is there the slightest suggestion of submergence. On the contrary, the site of Sodom is regarded not as sea-covered, but as salt-covered and infertile, soil. It is interesting that, in their allusions to the catastrophe, neither Strabo (xvi.) nor Tacitus (*Hist.* v. 7.) speaks of submergence. All the more surprising is it that accurate scholars like Siegfried and Stade should twice have stated that the cities are sunk in the Dead Sea. *Handwörterbuch*, artt. סדם and עמרה. On Cheyne, see next note.

[2] In the above paragraph I have had chiefly in view a learned article by Canon Cheyne in the *New World*, vol. i., 1892, pp. 236-245, which seems to me to have all the three faults I have instanced. Canon Cheyne dwells much on the parallel afforded by the stories of cities sunk beneath the ocean, which, as I have shown, are relevant to this argument only for pointing out how free the Bible story is from such an exaggeration, even though the Dead Sea must have suggested it from the first. Canon Cheyne also does not mention the scientific evidence. He is so sure, however, of his argument, that he ascribes any belief in the described facts to an uncritical orthodoxy and purely doctrinal interests. This may be easily disproved by citing, from among scientists, Nötling, who both gives a site for the towns and a reason for their overthrow, and, from among critics who cannot be charged with a dogmatic bias, Knobel, who, on Gen. xix. 28, says: 'Dem Bericht liegt ohne Zweifel eine Thatsache zu Grund.' It is a pity for criticism that such total

It is in accordance with the grace of God, making that first which was last and that last which was first, that this awful vale of judgment, to which its inhabitants sometimes gave the name of Hell, should be the scene of one of the most lively and stupendous hopes of prophecy. To the north of Jerusalem begins the torrent-bed of the Kedron. It sweeps past the Temple Mount, past what were afterwards Calvary and Gethsemane. It leaves the Mount of Olives and Bethany to the left, Bethlehem far to the right. It plunges down among the bare terraces, precipices and crags of the wilderness of Judæa—the wilderness of the Scape-goat. So barren and blistered, so furnacelike does it become as it drops below the level of the sea, that it takes the name of Wady-en-Nar, or the Fire Wady. At last its dreary course brings it to the precipices above the Dead Sea, into which it shoots its scanty winter waters ; but all summer it is dry. The imagination of a prophet who always haunted the austere and weird, Ezekiel, filled the Wady of Fire with water from under the threshold of the temple, water that came up to the ankles, and then to the knees, and then to the loins, and then became *waters of swimming, a torrent that could not be crossed.* And the bare banks, that

Ezekiel's vision of the Dead Sea.

rejection of any narrative should be made without exhaustive review of the evidence, or that those who still hold to the fact in it should be described as doing so for purely subjective reasons, when there is still so much evidence for it as fact. For myself I do not feel that it matters anything to faith, whether the story be historical or not. But there is much evidence for it. The various narratives belong as follows : ch. xiii., describing Lot's settlement in Sodom, is from the Jehovist, except vv. 6, 11 and 12, which are probably from the Priestly Writing ; ch. xiv., the defeat of the five kings, is from an unknown source outside the chief documents, and by some held to be of date contemporary with its events ; and ch. xix. 1-28 is from the Jehovist, but v. 29 from the Priestly Writing. The ghastly story, 30-38, is probably from some other source.

the sun blisters, had *very many trees on the one side and on the other.* And these waters *went down to the 'Arabah, and went into the sour waters, and the waters were to be healed.* And the Dead Sea was to swarm with fish, and it *shall come to pass, the fishers shall stand upon it from En-gedi to En-eglaim.* But in the midst of the vision there is a curious reservation of a utilitarian kind, *the fens and the marishes thereof shall not be healed, they shall be given for salt,* —salt which under the Old Covenant the Dead Sea ever supplied, for house or temple, meat or sacrifice, and still sends up to Jerusalem by the long camel trains you see traversing the coast from Usdum to En-gedi. But the vision opens out again. *And by the torrent upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall come up all trees for food, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters issued out of the Sanctuary, and the fruit thereof shall be for food, and the leaf thereof for bruises and sores.*[1] So there is nothing,—nothing too sunken, too useless, too doomed,—but by the grace of God it may be redeemed, lifted and made rich with life.

Passing over several of Herod's cruelties and his own awful end, which happened at Jericho within the Dead Sea region, we come to the last historic scene on these bitter coasts—the Massacre of Masada.

Masada.

Masada, or Sebbeh, as it is called to-day, lies on the coast, five hours to the south of En-gedi. Seen from the north it is an immense rock, half a mile long by an eighth broad, hewn out of the range that runs down the coast, and twisted round so as to point boldly north-east across the sea. It is isolated,

[1] Ezek. xlvii. 1-12.

precipitous on every side and inaccessible except in two places, where winding paths, half goat-tracks half ladders, may be followed by men in single file.[1] On the west this stronghold falls only some 400 feet upon a promontory that connects it with the range behind. Everywhere else it shows, at least, 1300 feet of cliff, but seaward as much as 1700. The fortresses are very few that match this one in natural strength. But it is only when you come to it, as those who would attack it had to come, through the waterless wilderness of Judæa, that you feel its awful remoteness, its savage height, its fitness to turn whole armies of besiegers into stony despair. Masada is the Gorgon's head magnified to a mountain. After six hours' ride through the falling chaos of Jeshimon,[2] we found faint traces of a military road,—our Arabs called this Karossa el Khufeiriyeh, —only to lose them on the edge of a cliff. Leading our horses down this cliff by a path, each turn of which was visible only when we came to it, we struck the bed of the Wady Safsaf, and followed it towards the great bulk of rock which shut out the Dead Sea from our view, and soon towered above us. This was Masada, bare, brown, inaccessible, except for a narrow bank reared against it at a steep angle, and in its white colour very distinct from the rock itself. The bank rose from the neck of land which connects the rock with the wady behind. We climbed it on foot. Half way up we struck to the right along the almost precipitous rock, and then turned left by another sloping shelf, which brought us to a gateway with

[1] Josephus notices these two approaches. One of them he calls the Snake. De Saulcy says he has flattered it. 'C'est une escalade sans interruption.'—*Voyage autour de la Mer Morte.*

[2] See p. 312 f.

a pointed arch. A few more steps placed us on the summit. It is a plateau almost 700 yards long, and in breadth varies from 180 yards at the north end to 250 at the south. The view is magnificent, and at first dazzled our eyes to the interesting ruins at our feet. We saw the Dead Sea in its whole length. En-gedi was clear to the north, the Jebel Usdum clear to the south. The peninsula, El-Lisân, lay brilliant white on the brilliant blue of the water. Behind it ran the long wall of Moab, and over the top of this we discerned plainly the position of Kerak. Only westward was the view confined, and yet it had its own fascination, for here rise the jagged cliffs of Jeshimon, with the uncouth valley running up through them. Immediately below is the neck of land coming out to Masada from this valley, the dizzy depths of the gorges on either side, and eastward the broad flat beach of the sea.

The buildings.

The ruins on Masada are the gateway already noticed, the débris of a wall running right round the edge of the plateau, and on the latter, cisterns and tombs, the remains of a castle and of a great palace, a chapel with the apse still standing, and curious mosaics on the walls. The pointed arch of the gateway and the chapel are certainly Byzantine or later. The rest of the ruins are Herodian. It is with them that the real history of Masada is bound up.

Jonathan Maccabeus was the first to build a fortress on the rock.[1] Herod fled to it with his bride Mariamne in 42 B.C., when the Parthians took Jerusalem; and eight years later he elaborately built upon it. He enclosed the plateau by a wall seven furlongs in circumference with

[1] Hence the name מצדה = fortress.

towers. He built a richly-furnished palace on the west, and floored it with stones of several colours—the mosaic still found. The top of the hill, which was of fat soil, he reserved for cultivation ; he hewed many and great reservoirs for rain, and laid up in caverns immense quantities of wine, oil, pulse and dates. It is said that these stores were still in good condition a century later, when Masada, along with Machaerus and Hyrcaneum, fell into the hands of the Sicarii—the most fanatic and delirious of all the Jewish patriots in the war of Independence. In 70 A.D. when Jerusalem fell, a band of them, being the last survivors of the garrison, fled with Eleazar to Masada. They might well have thought themselves secure in a fortress so remote, and standing so well furnished in the midst of so waterless a country. But they had Rome to deal with. Now Palestine is stamped all over with proofs of the power of the Romans, yet nowhere are you so forced into admiration of their genius as when you stand on that Dead Sea coast below Masada, between their two camps, or mark the wall they built around the rock, or the white ramp they raised against it. They laid a road across a waterless desert, brought their siege-engines down cliffs, and fought for months, miles away from their water and their forage. The General was Flavius Silva, a lieutenant of Titus. On the earthen bank on the promontory he raised another bank of stones, and on that a great tower plated with iron. This brought the battering-ram on a level with the edge of the plateau, and it breached Herod's wall. The defenders built an inner wall, that was but a great trough of wood packed with earth, and the blows of the ram only made this more compact. Silva set it on fire. At first the flames were blown

The massacre of Masada.

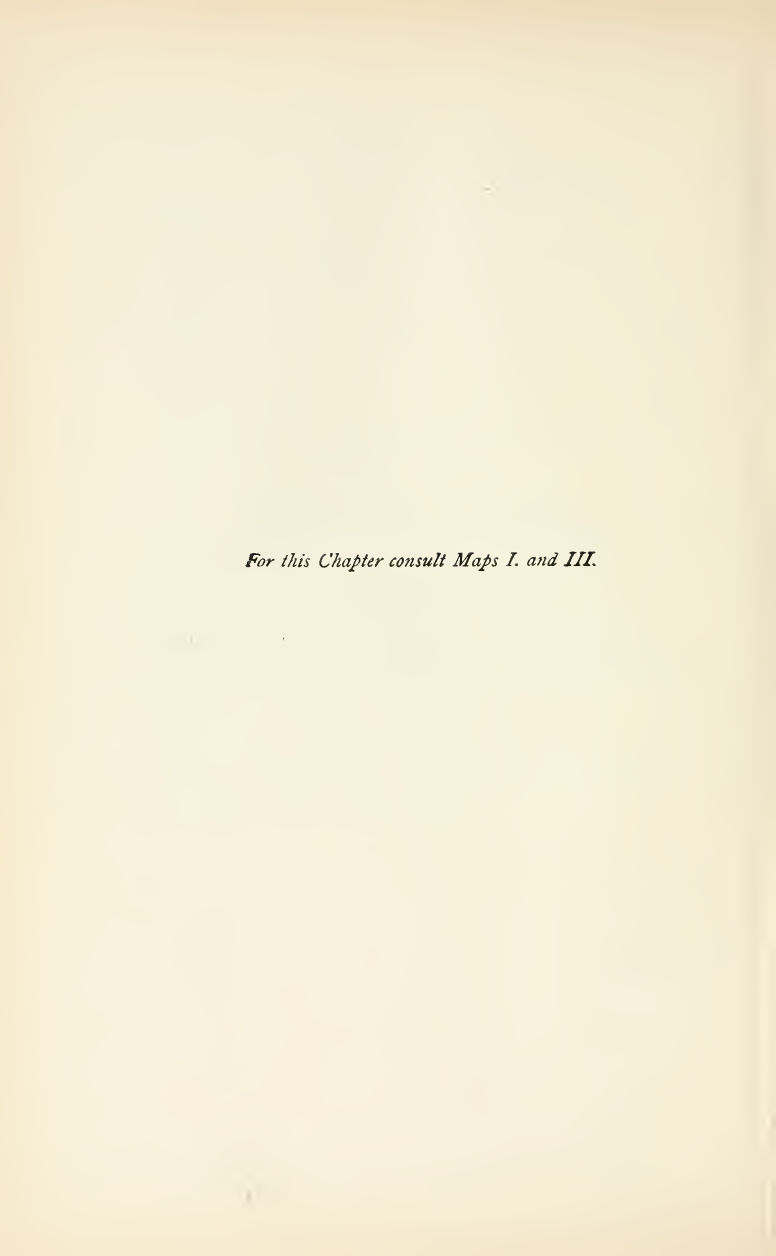
on the besiegers, but, the wind changing, the fire coursed through the whole wall. The Romans let it burn, and retired to their camps for the night. Next morning they planted their ladders and prepared for the assault. But no one met them, and on all the plateau nothing moved except the still smouldering fire. The first of the storming party stood still on the tops of their ladders and sent across the silence a great shout. Then two women with some children came out of a cave, and told that when the inner wall took fire, Eleazar gathered his men and urged them, rather than fall into Roman hands, or let their wives and children so fall, to kill the latter, and then to slay each other. Moved by his words into a great fury, not one drew back or scrupled, but, kissing them with tears, each slew those who were dearest to him. Then by lot ten of the men were chosen to fall upon the others, who received their death-blows lying stretched upon their families. And of those ten one was chosen who slew the other nine, and, setting fire to all their property that had been gathered together for burning, he fell upon his own sword. The two women who now met the Romans had hidden themselves with five children, and these were the only survivors of a garrison of nearly one thousand.

BOOK III

EASTERN PALESTINE

CHAPTER XXIV

OVER JORDAN: THE GENERAL FEATURES



For this Chapter consult Maps I. and III.

OVER JORDAN: THE GENERAL FEATURES

'WHO,' says Dean Stanley, 'that has ever travelled in Palestine has not longed to cross the Jordan Valley to those mysterious hills which close every eastward view with their long horizontal outline, their overshadowing heights, their deep purple shade?' He justly calls them 'the most novel feature of the Holy Land,' 'the elevating and solemn background of all that is poor and mean in the scenery of Western Palestine.' Now only part of their impressiveness is due to their height, enhanced as it is by the unusual depression of the Jordan Valley below them; they derive by far the most of their fascination from their sustained line of elevation. As you see this from afar, you feel in it the promise of a fresh and spacious country behind—high, healthy areas of life, an open and a richly furnished stage for history.

This promise is amply fulfilled when you cross Jordan and climb the range of Eastern Palestine. The country is about 150 miles long from Hermon on the north to the south end of the Dead Sea; its breadth, from the edge of the Jordan Valley to the edge of the desert, varies from thirty to eighty. Yet throughout this great extent the average elevation must be nearly 2000 feet above the level of the sea, or 2800 above the average level of Jordan. The consequence is a

The eastern plateau.

temperate climate lifted above the almost tropic heats which surround it to west and south. In winter the snow lies for days at a time;[1] even in November and March there are frosts;[2] and the temperature falls low enough to explain the old Arab saying that the cold has one of its homes in the Belka'.[3] Throughout summer there seems to be more rain, mist, and cloud than upon the other side of Jordan,[4] and the days are swept by breezes from the west with the freshness of the sea upon them. The Jaulan and Hauran were called by the Romans 'Palestina Salutaris;' and Oliphant says that 'cool-blowing' is an epithet Arab poets are fond of applying to the Nukra, or southern end of Hauran.[5] We traversed Eastern Palestine during twenty-two days of midsummer,[6] and were therefore able to test the climate. We had thrice dense mists,[7] and several very cold evenings. Every morning about ten a breeze sprang up from the west, and lasted till sun-down, so that although the noon temperature in the Jordan Valley, as often as we entered it, was at least 103°, on the table-land above we seldom had it over 90°.[8] Whether upon the shadeless plain of Hauran, where the

Its health.

[1] Seetzen (*Reisen*, vol. i.) had during February very deep snow.

[2] Burckhardt (*Travels in Syria*, 92) reports strong hoar frosts in November in Hauran. Merrill (*East of Jordan*, 358) found ice in the heart of Gilead on March 18th with a temperature in the air of 38°.

[3] The portion of the Eastern range from Arnon to Jabbok.

[4] Burckhardt, *id. passim.* Buckingham, *Travels*, etc., chaps. xviii.-xxiv., Post, *P.E.F.Q.*, 1888, pp. 191, 203-205.

[5] *Land of Gilead*, 102.

[6] 16th June to 7th July 1891.

[7] At Ghabaghib, Irbid (see p. 65), and Wady Yabis.

[8] At the same time, in the gorges by which the table-land is cut the heat was generally stifling; cf. Burckhardt's experience in the Arnon on July 14th. —*Travels*, etc., 373.

ripe corn swayed like the sea before the wind,[1] or upon the ridges of Gilead, where the oak branches rustled and their shadows swung to and fro over the cool paths,[2] most of the twelve hours were almost as bracing as the dawn, and night fell, not, as in other parts of Palestine, to repair, but to confirm, the influences of the day. Eastern Palestine is a land of health. This was our first impression, as we rose to Hauran by the steppes south of Pharpar, the wind blowing over from Hermon, and this was our last impression, when we regretfully struck our tents on the pastures of Moab, where the dry herbage makes the breezes as fragrant as the heather the winds of our own Highlands. Victory and Good Fortune were the favourite deities of the later Pagans of this region, but their temples might more fitly have been dedicated to the goddess Hygeia.

The waters of Eastern Palestine.

But Eastern Palestine does more than fulfil its promise of fresh air. Broad and breezy as it looks from afar, it also looks barren, and when you come upon it surprises you by its fertility. Next to its air, its waters are its most charming feature. West of the Jordan no rivers run, and only a few perennial streams, but here are at least four rivers—Yarmuk, 'Arab, Jabbok and Arnon, of which the Yarmuk, with its great falls, is as large as Jordan.[3] These rivers drain the whole country and the desert behind. They run in deep gorges, below the average level of the plateau, but they are fed by numerous springs and streams, which, with the winter snow and rains, sufficiently water the higher lands.[4]

[1] See ch. xxix.

[2] Post also speaks of 'the cool air of the uplands of Gilead.'—*P.E.F.Q.*, 1888, 200.

[3] *i.e.* before Jordan receives Yarmuk.

[4] Only on the heights of the Belka' the water is insufficient.

Luxuriant vegetation is, therefore, almost universal, and all agriculture prosperous. In the most northerly of the three divisions of the country, from Hermon to the Yarmuk, a large part of the surface, being of a rich volcanic soil, is tilled for wheat, and the rest is covered by a thick herbage.[1] This is Hauran, the granary of Syria, and the hilly district to the west of it was once thickly wooded. The middle region, Gilead, between the Yarmuk and the Jabbok, has its ridges covered by forests, under which you may march for the whole day in breezy and fragrant shade;[2] the valleys hold orchards of pomegranate, apricot and olive, there are many vineyards, on the open plains are fields of wheat and maize,[3] and the few moors are rich in fragrant herbs.[4] Gilead bore perfume and medicine for the whole Eastern world. They who first break out of her into history are *a company of Ishmaelites with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt.*[5] It became a proverb, *Is there no balm in Gilead, is there no physician there!* and again, *Go up into Gilead and take balm!*[6] In the third division, south of the Jabbok, the forests gradually cease, and Ammon and

The fertility.

[1] See chap. xxix.

[2] Cf. Burckhardt, *Travels*, etc., 348. 'Grateful shade of fine oak and pistachios, with a scenery more like that of Europe than any I had yet seen in Syria.'—Post, *P.E.F.Q.*, 1888, p. 200. Oliphant (*Land of Gilead*, 160) aptly quotes 2 Sam. xviii. 8: *the wood devoured more people that day than the sword.* Of the valley in which 'Ajlun lies he says justly that it was 'a view such as one would expect to find in the Black Forest.' On the fertility of Gilead, cf. 129, 130.

[3] Like the Beka'a and the plateau above it near Salt.

[4] On the botany see especially, Post, *P.E.F.Q.*, 1888.

[5] Gen. xxxvii. 25.

[6] Jer. viii. 22; xlvi. 11. The substance is known to botany as the *Balsamum Gileadense.*

Moab are mostly high, bare moors, with a few jungles of bush. They are occasionally cultivated for wheat and once bore the vine.

More famous than the tilth of Eastern Palestine is her pasture. We passed through at the height of the shepherd's year. From the Arabian deserts the Bedouin were swarming to the fresh summer herbage of these uplands. We should never have believed the amount of their flocks had we not seen, and attempted to count them. One Sunday afternoon which we spent at Edrei, the 'Aneezeh tribe,[1] that roams from Euphrates to Jordan, drove their camels upon the plain to the north of the town, till we counted nearly a thousand feeding, and there was a multitude more behind. Next day we passed their foes, the Beni Sahr, one of whose camel-herds numbered four hundred, and another two hundred. We looked south-east from the hills above Amman, and there were hundreds more of the Sherârat Arabs from Ma'an. *Profusion of camels shall cover thee, camels of Midian and Ephah, all of them from Sheba shall come.*[2] The Bedouin had also many sheep and goats. The herds of the settled inhabitants were still more numerous. In Moab the dust of the roads bears almost no marks but those of the feet of sheep. The scenes which throng most our memory of Eastern Palestine, are (besides the threshing-floors of Hauran) the streams of Gilead in the heat of the day with the cattle standing in them, or the evenings when we sat at the door of our tent near the village well, and would hear the shepherd's pipe far away, and the sheep and goats, and cows with the heavy bells, would break over the edge of the hill and come down

The pastures and herds.

[1] Or a branch of it—the Oulad 'Ali.

[2] Isa. lx. 6.

the slope to wait their turn at the troughs. Over Jordan we were never long out of the sound of the lowing of cattle or of the shepherd's pipe.

And so one understands why so large a part of the annals of this country is taken up with the multiplying of cattle, tribute in sheep and wool,[1] and the taking of spoil by tens of thousands of camels, and hundreds of thousands of sheep.[2] The bulls of Bashan and the fat kine of Bashan are proverbial throughout the Old Testament. 'Thou canst not,' runs an Arab saying, 'find a country like the Belka'' for cattle and sheep.[3] When Moses overcame Midian the spoil was reckoned at more than half a million of sheep, 72,000 beeves, and 61,000 asses.[4] *When the children of Reuben and of Gad, who had a very great multitude of cattle, saw the land of Jazer and Gilead*, they asked it for themselves, *for the place was a place for cattle.*[5] When Reuben lingered in his own country and would not cross Jordan to the help of the Lord against the mighty, Deborah taunted him :—

> '*By the water-courses of Reuben great were the resolves!*
> *Why* then *didst thou abide among the sheep-hurdles,*
> *To listen to the bleating of the flocks?*
> *By the water-courses of Reuben there were great resolves of heart!*'[6]

The king of Moab is called a sheepmaster, and the tribute he gave the king of Israel is set at 100,000 lambs, and 100,000 rams with the wool.[7] Thus flocks and pastures have ever been the wealth, the charm, the temptation of Eastern Palestine.

[1] 2 Chron. v. 9 ; 2 Kings iii. 4. [2] 2 Chron. v. 21.
[3] Burckhardt, 369.
[4] One cannot, of course, vouch for the truth of these numbers.
[5] Num. xxxii. 1. [6] Judges v. 16. [7] 2 Kings iii. 4.

The third general feature of Eastern Palestine is its openness to the desert. Bashan, Gilead, and Moab all roll off, with almost no intervening barrier, upon the great Arabian plateau. Consequently they have been exposed in all ages to the invasion of the hungry nomads, some of whom swarm upon them every year for pasture, while others have settled down into more permanent occupation:[1] living in movable camps, but cultivating the soil. These are the Ishmaelites and Midianites of the Old Testament; *children of the East*, who made Gilead their basis of operation against Western Palestine. It was the sons of Ishmael whom Balak called to help him against Israel. Their sheikhs went with the elders of Moab to bring Balaam from the farther east to curse the people of Jehovah,[2] and the last war Moses undertook was to avenge Jehovah upon Midian.[3] Again in the days of the Judges they swarmed across Jordan, and every spring, pitching their black tents in Jezreel, swept off the harvests from the valleys of Ephraim. But Gideon beat them back across the river, and finally broke them upon Moab. *He took the two kings of Midian, Zebah and Zalmunnah, and discomfited all the host.*[4] The *Day of Midian* was very decisive.[5] But though, for many centuries to come, Israel had nothing to fear on this frontier from Arabia, the tides rose again in the close of her history,[6] and even till now they have flowed and ebbed unceasing. You stand

Exposure to the desert.

Action of the Arabs.

[1] The Arab tribes of Eastern Palestine are clearly distinguishable into one or other of these classes: (1) Bedouin, whose range lies wholly within Eastern Palestine, like the 'Adwan, Beni Sahr, etc.; (2) those who come in every year from Arabia like the 'Aneezeh, Sherârat, etc.

[2] Num. xxii. 6. [3] Num. xxxi. [4] Judges viii. 12.

[5] Isa. ix. 4 (Eng. Vers.). [6] Josephus, xiii. *Antt.* xiii. 3.

to-day on one of the Moab hills, and looking east you see nothing but a tossed and weary land, as destitute of signs of life as mid-ocean. Yet as irresistibly and almost as regularly as ocean is drawn upon great tides by the moon, so have these trackless wastes been swept by tides of men, drawn on by hunger and the hope of spoil. Successive civilisations—Semitic, Greek, Roman, and Turkish—have kept them back for a time, but as these decayed, they have swept in again with the regularity and remorselessness of the sea. Scattered across Hauran and Gilead were great Greek cities, the military roads of the Roman Empire, large castles and towers of the Turks. But to-day those are all in ruins, and the names of many of them forgotten. Whereas the Bedawee pitches his camps about them, herds his sheep in their courts, and calls himself by the very names which his ancestors bore there in the days of Gideon. A Zeeb still leads a Midianite tribe in Moab.[1] The Beni-Mesaid pitch their summer camp where an inscription of 214 A.D. records the presence of a nomad tribe of the same name.[2] They extort the same blackmail; if it is withheld, they sweep off the harvests in the same ruthless fashion.[3] We found Arab tents pitched near the flourishing town of Irbid, and in the tents a Bedawee chieftainess, to whom the Irbid people, in spite of having a Turkish lieutenant-governor and a troop of soldiers in their midst, pay annual tribute for the security of their crops. The tax is called by a euphemism Brotherhood, and the town which yields it is known as the sister of the tribe that makes the

[1] ‘Ali Di‘ab=Zeeb=wolf, the chief of the ‘Adwan.

[2] Waddington, 2287: *φυλή Μοζαιεδήνων*.

[3] Or burn them, Burckhardt, *Travels*, etc.

demand. It is so established a custom that Government allows it, and even takes a percentage of their spoil from the nomads.[1] But it was among the ruins of an ancient city that we felt most the force of these desert tides upon Eastern Palestine. At Pella, overlooking the Jordan, there was once a great town, with a castle, colonnades, mausoleums, pagan temples, and a noble Christian cathedral. You can now distinguish these only by their basement lines and a few pillars. Scarcely one stone stands upon another. But close beside them, when we were there, stood the tents of a large Bedawee tribe. Frail houses of hair, they were here four thousand years ago, ere civilisation had left the Nile and the Euphrates, and they flowed in again upon the decay of one of her most powerful bulwarks. For the Arabs have been like the wild ocean, barred off for a time, yet prevailing at last over the patience and virtue of great empires.

Result—A land of opulence and insecurity.

We have now discovered the secrets of the confusing history of Eastern Palestine. Here is a land which is blessed more than most with health and fertility, but its health is paralysed by its danger, its fertility has ever been checked and blasted by the floods of human barbarism to which it lies so exposed. And hence the mingled brilliance and ineffectiveness of the history of this province—the civilisation which sprang so quickly and so richly from its soil, the ruins which everywhere cover it to-day. No land possesses greater power of recuperation, but except for the first five centuries of our era its enemies have never given its wounds time to heal. Israel planted on the east of Jordan

[1] 'Brotherhood,' Ḥuwah; 'Sister,' Uḥt. Burckhardt describes the whole system as it prevails in Hauran.—*Travels*, etc., 300 ff.

tribes as valiant and righteous[1] as those which she brought to the west, and in a richer soil. Yet they had no part in the greatness of the nation, and the Kingdom and Church of God were built upon Western Palestine. Ammon and Moab were wealthier than Judah and Ephraim, yet they never reached even the merely political achievements of the latter. We read of many cities in Eastern Palestine in early times, but which of them became famous? We know the sites of only a very few. The land of Uz has been identified with various parts of Eastern Palestine; and indeed one could not get a better summary of the whole history of the region than the story of the substance of Job and of the disasters which swept it away. But two other proofs may be given of the same insecurity of so fertile a province.

One is the existence of subterranean fortresses and towns, and of towns which are of the next degree to subterranean, being built in the heart of these intricate mazes of lava which have spread and cracked open in the north-east of the region.[2]

Underground Cities.

The careful and elaborate architecture of these refuges

[1] Gen. xlix.; Deut. xxxiii.

[2] Of subterranean towns the most famous is that of Edrei, on which see later, p. 576. In an inscription in Kanawat (Wadd. 2329) Agrippa I. blames the inhabitants for dwelling in caves and bids them build houses, cf. Joseph. xiv. *Antt.* xv. 5, xv. *Antt.* x. 1, xvi. *Antt.* ix. 1. Strabo (xvi. 2. 20) mentions great caves in the Trachons (he wrongly says in mountains beyond the Trachons), one of which could hold 4000 robbers; cf. Wetzstein, *Reisebericht über Hauran u. die Trachonen*, 36 ff.; also what he says of the caves in Zumle and Es-Sûêt, pp. 46 f.; mentioned also by William of Tyre, xxii. 21, as the 'Cavea Roob.' In Gilead caves are only less numerous. Oliphant (*Land of Gilead*, pp. 147, 161 f.) was told both by his guides and the Turkish officials of an underground village in Gilead, Belvola, but did not find it. He thinks it near the Jebel Kafkafa. He also heard of vast subterranean dwellings at a place Rehab, east of the Kala'at ez Zerka (p. 218). On the great caverns at Arak-el-Emîr, see Conder's *Heth and Moab*, pp. 169 ff.; also

testifies at once to the high culture of the inhabitants and to the frequency of the barbaric invasions against which they took such formidable precautions. History corroborates; from Strabo to Wetzstein we read again and again of how the population was run to earth,[1] and to-day travellers tell us that whole cityfuls of men, in order to avoid some new line of Arab invasion, will migrate in a single night to some other city which had lain empty for years from a similar cause.[2] This sudden transference of large numbers of the settled inhabitants is extraordinary; no two travellers, between whose visits ten years have elapsed, will give you the same account of the cultivation or populousness of the same district.

But this strange combination of opulence and insecurity, which is the chief feature of Eastern Palestine, is perhaps most clearly illustrated by the fortunes upon her of Greek civilisation. These healthy and fertile plateaus were early discovered and occupied by the Greeks. Veterans of Alexander the Great founded cities; the Syrian and Egyptian dynasties in turn attempted to organise the region. Yet in spite of all this there was achieved in Eastern Palestine no permanent civilisation till the coming of the Romans. Across Jordan Greek remains of the Seleucid age are the merest fragments;[3]

The Greeks and Rome.

P.E.F. Mem. on Eastern Palestine; for cities in the great lava mazes, cf. Wetzstein, *op. cit.* Porter, *Five Years in Damascus*, ii. The Lejá is covered with ruins. The remains of one town, Musmieh, are three miles in circumference, and so situated that 'it was necessary to cut a road through the lava bed in order to reach the city, which no doubt enjoyed immunity from attack, since the rock fields about it are almost impassable.'—Merrill, *East of Jordan*, p. 16.

[1] See especially Wetzstein, *Reisebericht*, etc., p. 46.

[2] Burckhardt, *Travels*. Post, *op. cit.*

[3] One or two inscriptions may date from the Seleucids; cf. those given by Burckhardt, *Travels in Syria*.

nor does history record there any real progress. It required nothing less than the genius of Rome, the power of the Legions, the organisation of the Empire, to build a bulwark between Syria and the desert; and even those enormous powers took nearly two centuries to their task. We shall follow the interesting details later on. Here it is only necessary to state that Pompey brought the first Legions to Eastern Palestine in 64 B.C.; that from that year the Greek cities date their civic eras, as if previously they had had no real history; that Greek coins and inscriptions begin to multiply; that the underground cities are abandoned, and that Greek art and letters abundantly flourish. About 106 A.D. Trajan creates another province between Syria and the eastern borders of the Empire, thus removing her even from touch with the desert. Then follows the splendid rule of the Antonines. Eastern Palestine is covered with roads; her fields are cultivated for some centuries in peace, and her cities permitted to multiply to such an extent that to-day the astonished traveller, as he passes across her once more Arab-swept surface, can stand almost nowhere but the sites of two or three of them are in his view.

That no power but Rome has ever held Eastern Palestine secure against the desert, is the crowning feature of the strange history of this land.

CHAPTER XXV

THE DIVISIONS AND NAMES OF EASTERN PALESTINE



For this Chapter consult Maps I. and III.

THE DIVISIONS AND NAMES OF EASTERN PALESTINE

EASTERN Palestine may be said to stretch from Hermon to the south end of the Dead Sea. To form a clear idea of its provinces we must note the three large rivers which cut it at right angles to the Jordan—the Arnon, the Jabbok, and the Yarmuk. Of these the Arnon has nearly always formed the political boundary to the south.[1] The other two, the Jabbok and the Yarmuk, divide Eastern Palestine into three separate provinces. The southern face of Hermon—continued eastwards by the Jebel 'Aswad—is properly the northern boundary; but round on the east of Hermon there is room for the territory of Damascus. Separated by Anti-Lebanon from the west and the north, Damascus is thrown upon Eastern Palestine. But its slope to the desert, while all the rest of the country drains to the Jordan, as well as the low line of hills to the south of it, sufficiently distinguish the territory of Damascus from the three provinces which form Eastern Palestine proper. These we now take from north to south. Physically they are quite distinct.

The dividing rivers.

[1] Israel's territory never went south of Arnon, and to-day the Arnon is the practical boundary of the Turkish province of the Belka'.

I. The Three Natural Divisions.

Across the most northerly division, from Hermon to Yarmuk, the limestone which forms the basis of the country is covered by volcanic deposits. The stone is basalt, the soil is rich, red loam resting on beds of ash, and there are vast 'harras' or eruptions of lava, suddenly cooled and split open into the most tortuous shapes. Down the edge of the Jordan valley, and down the border of the desert run rows of extinct volcanoes. The centre of this northern province is a great plain, perhaps fifty miles long by twenty broad, scarcely broken by a hill, and almost absolutely treeless. This is Hauran proper. To the west of this, above the Jordan, is the hilly and once well-wooded district of Jaulan; to the east the 'harras' and extinct volcanoes already noticed; and in the south-east the high range of Jebel Hauran or Jebel ed-Druz. All beyond is desert draining to the Euphrates.

(1) North of the Yarmuk.

South of the Yarmuk the volcanic elements almost entirely disappear and the limestone comes to the surface. We experienced an interesting proof of the suddenness of the change. In every village of Hauran we had found ancient inscriptions, still legible in the hard black basalt; but when we crossed the Yarmuk we found almost no inscriptions and very little carving—the limestone is not a material to have preserved them.[1] Between the Yarmuk and Jabbok the

(2) Between the Yarmuk and the Jabbok.

[1] In the towns south of the Yarmuk the few inscriptions we came across were nearly all in basalt. This is true of Gadara, on the border of the

country is mainly disposed in high ridges, fully forested; eastward there are plains.[1]

South of Jabbok the ridges and forests alike diminish, till by the north end of the Dead Sea the country assumes the form of an absolutely treeless plateau, in winter bleak, in summer breezy and fragrant. This plateau is broken only by deep, wide, warm valleys like the Arnon, across which it rolls south beyond our present survey. Eastward it is separated from the desert by low rolling hills.

(3) Between the Jabbok and the Arnon.

These three sections, then, are physically distinct from each other and from the territory of Damascus to the north. It is unfortunate that through ancient history we do not find the same definiteness of political division and nomenclature. In Eastern Palestine names are everywhere adrift. We are best able to fix those of the present day, and from them we can work backwards into the past.

II. The Names and Divisions of To-day.

To-day the chief line of political division is the Jabbok. By this the whole of Eastern Palestine, except Damascus, is divided into two Mutasserafliks or Provinces.[2] South of the Jabbok, and comprising the ridges and table-land to the Arnon, is the Belka'. The Belka' is administered from Nablus, but has its own local capital at

The Belka'.

volcanic region. In Gerasa both basalt and limestone were used. Between Yarmuk and Jabbok there are one or two extinct craters and some outcrops of basalt.

[1] See p. 578.

[2] See Additional Notes to Second Edition.

Es-Salt.[1] North of the Jabbok, and as far as the territory of Damascus, extends the Mutasseraflik of Hauran,[2] with its capital at El-Merkez.[3] It is divided into the following districts:—Between the Jabbok and the Yarmuk lies the wooded district of ʻAjlun, administered from Irbid. North of the Yarmuk, along the Jordan Valley to the slopes of Hermon runs Jaulan;[4] it is divisible into a southern and more arable, and a northern and more rocky half; the whole is administered from El-Kuneitrah. The eastern border is the river ʻAllan, a tributary of the Yarmuk, and the Wady Rukkad. But still east of this lies the town Sahem ej-Jaulan, and in Porter's day the Jaulan extended to the Hajj Road. Other divisions of the Mutasseraflik of Hauran, each under a Kaimakam, are the Jebel ed-Druz, administered from es-Suweda, Deraʻat, and Buṣr-el-Hariri.[5]

Larger Hauran.

ʻAjlun.

Jaulan.

The great plain to the east of Jaulan is called Hauran in the narrower but popular sense of the name. It stretches north and south from the territory of Damascus to the district of ʻAjlun, from the Jebel 'Aswad to the Wady Shelâleh or Upper Yarmuk.[6] The southern end of it is called En-Nukra, 'the hollow hearth' of the Bedouin, for it lies low[7] between the hilly

Hauran proper.

[1] Strictly speaking, the southern border is the Arnon, but practically the Belkaʻ extends farther south.

[2] *Sic*, and not 'The Hauran.'

[3] The early Arab geographers called all the country from Damascus to the Belkaʻ, Saouad of Damascus (Rey, *Col. Franques*, p. 434). Those quoted by Le Strange (*Pal. under Moslems*, p. 34) make the territory of Damascus extend to the borders of the Belkaʻ, and mention as districts within it: Jaidur, Jaulan, Hauran with its capital Bûṣra, El-Bathanieyyah with its capital Edrei, or Adhraʻâh.

[4] Surveyed and described by Schumacher, *The Jaulan*, London, 1888, translated from *Z.D.P.V.* for 1886. Its extent is about 560 square miles.

[5] Hartmann (*Z.D.P.V.* xiii. 61) says that at present Es-Salt is also under Hauran.

[6] Schumacher

[7] See p. 552 for a proposed derivation of Hauran.

Jaulan on the west, the Lejá and more distant Jebel Hauran on the east, and the ridge of Zumleh behind Edrei on the south. The name Hauran extends vaguely towards the desert, but the features are so varied as to be separately designated. To the east of the plain there is the Lejá — the long, low flood of lava, 'the tempest in stone'—twenty-four miles by ten to twenty.[1] East of this is another plain, the Wady Liwa or Nimreh, the upper part of which is called 'Ard el Beteniyeh;[2] while to the south of this is the Jebel Hauran or Druz, on which Druse Sheikhs hold themselves half independent of the Government.

The Hajj road.

From Damascus the Hajj Road traverses the Hauran plain to Muzeirib, on the sources of the Yarmuk, and thence the desert to the east of 'Ajlun and the Belka'.[2] It is a very ancient line of traffic to the Gulf of Akaba; but in early Arab history a more frequented route into Arabia was that which held eastward through Boṣra, and in those days Boṣra, or Eski-Shem, disputed with Damascus the front rank among cities in this region.

With these divisions and names of to-day before us, we can now go back to the disposition of the land as it was in the Greek period and at the time of Christ, and then to its arrangement in Old Testament history.[3]

[1] Length from Burak to Tell Dubbeh; breadth in the south at Shuhbah twenty miles, but tapering gradually to a round headland on the north.

[2] So in Stubel's chart, and Fischer and Guthe's map.

[3] The arrangement of Eastern Palestine at the time of the Crusades would only disturb our study of its ancient divisions, so I put as much as we know of it in this note.

Eastern Palestine and the Crusades.

The Crusaders called Eastern Palestine Oultre Jourdain. To the south the Seigneurie of Krak and Montreal extended from the Arnon to Mount Sinai (Rey, *Colonies Franques*, p. 393). The territory of Suete, or Suhete, was the Jaulan, and was under the Principality of Galilee (*Ibid.* 434). The name is either the same as

III. Divisions and Names in the Greek Period: the Time of Christ.

In the Greek period the general name for all Eastern Palestine was Cœle-Syria.[1] This had at first been bestowed upon the hollow between the Lebanons,[2] and was thence loosely stretched over the whole of Southern Syria except Phœnicia.[3] But before the Romans came it seems to have been restricted again to the east of the Jordan, and by officially separating it from Phœnicia and Judæa, the Romans confirmed this restriction.[4] To Josephus, Cœle-Syria is all Eastern Palestine,[5] and the only town west of the Jordan which belonged to it was the capital of the Decapolis, Beth-Shan.[6]

Cœle-Syria.

Thus restricted to Eastern Palestine, Cœle-Syria consisted, to the south of the Yarmuk, of Peræa and the interlaced region of Decapolis, and, to the north of the Yarmuk, of the various provinces which in the time of Christ made up the tetrarchy of

Divided by the Yarmuk.

the Suwade of the Arab geographers or the modern El-Ṣûet = الصويت mentioned by Wetzstein (*Reisebericht*, p. 46). Gilead the Crusaders do not appear to have held. Baldwin I. took tribute about Es-Salt in 1118 (Rey, p. 435). Two expeditions reached Boṣra in 1113 and 1119. In 1125 and 1129 they did not advance beyond Suete.

[1] *Κοιλὴ Συρία.*

[2] To which it is perhaps still confined in 1 Esdr. iv. 48.

[3] 'Cœle-Syria and Phœnicia,' 1 Esdras ii. 17, 24, 27; vi. 29; vii. 1; viii. 67; 1 Macc. x. 69; 2 Macc. iii. 5, 8, where Jerusalem is given as one of its towns; 2 Macc. iv. 4; viii. 8; x. 11. Polybius, v. 80, and Diodorus Siculus, xix. 59, include the Philistine coast. Even Josephus once uses it in this general sense, xiv. *Antt.* iv. 5: 'Cœle-Syria as far as the river Euphrates and Egypt.'

[4] In 47 B.C. they gave the military charge of it to Herod, xiv. *Antt.* ix. 5. *στρατηγὸς τῆς Κοίλης Σύριας*, i. *Wars*, x. 8. In this passage Cœle-Syria is distinct from Samaria (8), Galilee (5), and, of course, Judæa; cf. Pliny, *H.N.*, v. 9.

[5] xiii. *Antt.* xiii. 3, including Moab and Ammon; cf. i. *Antt.* xi. 5.

[6] xiii. *Antt.* xiii. 2.

Philip,—Gaulanitis, Auranitis, Batanea, Trachonitis and Ituræan land. That is to say, while to-day the Jabbok is the principal line of division, and the Yarmuk subsidiary, in Greek days it was the Yarmuk which was the chief frontier with the Jabbok subsidiary.

Peræa.

Peræa was properly identical with the modern Belka', or the region between Jabbok and Arnon. In one passage Josephus says that it stretched from Pella, or just south of the Jabbok, to Machaerus, or just north of the Arnon, and from the Jordan to Philadelphia.[1] But the name, which simply means the land across, must have been used also in a wider sense, for elsewhere Josephus calls Gadara, on the very banks of the Yarmuk, the capital of Peræa.[2] North of the Yarmuk Peræa did not stretch. By Herod's will, confirmed by Augustus, Peræa was assigned with Galilee to Antipas. Geographically this was an awkward conjunction, for Galilee is the district with which Peræa has the slightest natural connection, while it was thus cut off from the regions immediately opposite, across the Yarmuk and the Jordan. There were, however, reasons, both racial and religious, for the arrangement. North of the Yarmuk the inhabitants were mainly Greek, and across the Jordan Samaria was Samaritan ; but in Peræa, as in Galilee, Jews formed the bulk of the population ;[3] and, narrow as the strip must have been which connected the two provinces, it formed an easy and convenient passage. The Jews always regarded Peræa, Galilee, and Judæa as the three

[1] iii. *Wars*, iii. 3.

[2] iv. *Wars*, vii. 3. Schlatter, however (*Zur Topographie u. Geschichte Palästinas*, 48 ff.), insists that another Gadara or Gadora, probably Es-Salt, is here meant.

[3] Josephus, xx. *Antt.* i. 1 ; iv. *Wars*, vii. 4-6.

Jewish provinces;[1] and when the Galilean pilgrims came up to the feasts at Jerusalem by Peræa, they felt they had travelled all the way on Jewish soil. When Mark says, *Christ cometh into the borders of Judæa and over Jordan*, it is Peræa that he means by the latter.[2] Here Christ met with Jewish doctors, who tempted Him, with a Jewish ruler who knew the law, and with Jewish mothers who brought their children to Him, that He might lay His hands upon them.

Jesus in Peræa.

North of the Jabbok Peræa intermingled with 'the region of Decapolis.'[3] Only in a vague way can Decapolis be called a geographical quantity. It was really the part of Eastern Palestine in which lay the cities of that famous league, their suburbs and the considerable territories over which they exercised rights of property and influence. These cities lay mostly south of the Yarmuk, but there were at least four to the north of that river. As we are to discuss them separately, more need not be said here.

When we come north of the Yarmuk, the definition of boundaries and names in the Greek period is much more difficult. Our starting-point is Philip's legacy under the will of Herod, confirmed by Augustus in 4 B.C. According to this, Philip's tetrarchy comprised Gaulanitis, Batanea, Trachonitis, Auranitis, and a certain 'part of the house of Zenodorus' about Paneas, or practically all the territory from Hermon to the Yarmuk and the frontier of Nabatea, which ran to the south of Kanatha

Philip's Tetrarchy.

[1] So frequently on the Mishna. Neubauer, *Géog. du Talmud.*

[2] Mark x. i., according to Westcott and Hort's reading: *τὰ ὅρια τῆς Ἰουδαίας καὶ πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου.*

[3] Pliny, *H.N.* v. 16: *Decapolitana Regio.* Note his words, 'has urbes intercursant.

and Hebran, but to the north of Boṣra and Salkhat.[1] The same is defined by the authorised version of Luke as *Ituræa and the region of Trachonitis*, or, as some prefer to render it, the *region Ituræan and of Trachonitis*.[2]

There can be no doubt about Gaulanitis. That province must have been practically the same as the present Jaulan, or all the country along the Jordan Valley between the Yarmuk and Hermon, with an uncertain eastern border along perhaps the river 'Allan. Like Jaulan, Gaulanitis was divided into an Upper and a Lower Department,[3] and, just as to-day, the eastern coast of the Lake of Galilee was cut off from it, and administered from Tiberias.[4] The northern end of the Gaulanitis seems also to have been known by the names of Ulatha[5] and the district of Paneas.

(*a*) Gaulanitis.

Nor is there much difficulty about Auranitis. The name is the same as Hauran. We have nowhere a definition of its limits, but probably, like Hauran to-day, it was properly the great plain east of Jaulan,[6] with the same loose extension south to the

(*b*) Auranitis.

[1] xvii. *Antt.* viii. 1, Gaulanitis, Trachonitis, and Paneas; xi. 4, Batanea, Trachonitis, Auranitis, and a certain part of the house of Zenodorus; xviii. *Antt.* iv. 6, Trachonitis, Gaulanitis, and the nation of the Bataneans; ii. *Wars*, vi. 3, Batanea, Trachonitis, Auranitis, and certain parts of Zeno's house about Jamnia, for which read Paneas. In iii. *Wars*, iii. 5: The region of Gamala, and Gaulanitis, and Batanea, and Trachonitis are given as the parts of the kingdom of Agrippa. 'This country begins at Mount Libanus,' *i.e.* Anti-Lebanon or Hermon, 'and the fountains of Jordan, and reaches breadthway to the Lake of Tiberias,' *i.e.* the south end, 'and in length extends from a village called Arpha,' unknown, 'as far as Julias,' *i.e.* Bethsaida on the Jordan. 'Its inhabitants are Jews and Syrians mixed.' For the frontier between Philip's tetrarchy and Nabatea, see pp. 617, 619, 621.

[2] Luke iii. 1: τῆς Ἰτουραίας καὶ Τραχωνίτιδος χώρας.

[3] Josephus, iv. *Wars*, i. 1.

[4] See p. 416, n. 1.

[5] Perhaps the same name as the modern Lake Huleh. Josephus, xv. *Antt.* x. 3. See p. 481.

[6] See p. 536.

Nabatean border,[1] and south-eastwards to the Jebel Hauran, the Mons Alsadamus or Asalmanos of Ptolemy.[2]

Our difficulties begin with Batanea. Batanea was the Greek form of the ancient Bashan,[3] and was originally applied, like the latter, in a general way, to all the country north of the Yarmuk. But in a special sense Batanea was distinguished from Trachonitis and Auranitis as only a part of Philip's tetrarchy.[4] It bordered on Trachonitis,[5] that is, the territory round the Lejá; the road by which Jewish pilgrims came from Babylon to Jerusalem passed across it,[6] and it seems to have been near to the territory of Gamala in Gaulanitis.[7] Most probably, therefore, Batanea lay between the Lejá and Gilead, in the present En-Nukra.[8] Certainly the name was still here in the fourth century[9] and in the tenth;[10] but it has now drifted, as we have seen, round to the east of the Lejá.[11] Very doubtful is the suggestion that we should recognise Batanea in the *Bethany beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.*[12]

(*c*) Batanea.

[1] This is probable from the fact that Zenodorus wished to sell Auranitis to the Nabateans, xvii. *Antt.* x. 2.

[2] Wetzstein, p. 90: Ἀσελδαμος, Ἀσαλμανος, Ἀλσαλαμος.

[3] So Josephus, iv. *Antt.* vii. 4; ix. *Antt.* viii. 1; and so the *Onomasticon*, art. Βασάν: *αὕτη Βασανῖτις ἡ νῦν καλουμένη* Βαταναία.

[4] xv. *Antt.* x. 1: i. *Wars*, xx. 4. In his *Life*, 11, Josephus talks of 'the Trachonites in Batanea.' Ecbatana, in this section, should probably be read *Βαθυρα*, see p. 618.

[5] xvii. *Antt.* ii. 1: 'the toparchy called Batanea, which country is bounded by Trachonitis.'

[6] *Ibid.* 2.

[7] This is to be inferred from Josephus, *Life*, 11.

[8] See p. 536.

[9] Eusebius, *Onomasticon*, places Astaroth and Edrei or Adraa in Batanea.

[10] Idrisi (quoted by Wetzstein, *Reisebericht*, 87) places Edrei in Betheniyeh.

[11] See p. 537.

[12] John's Gospel, i. 28, according to the best reading (Westcott and Hort). The suggestion is Conder's (*T. W.*). Bethany must be the name of a town, defined as *across Jordan*, to distinguish it from the other Bethany. Batanea would have stood without such definition.

(*d*) Trachonitis.

Trachonitis was the territory which contained the Trachon or Trachons. These are described by Strabo as 'the two so-called Trachones' lying 'behind Damascus.'[1] The name, the only Greek one among those we are discussing, corresponds exactly to the two great stretches of lava, 'the tempests in stone,' which lie to the south-east of Damascus—the Lejá and the Safa.[2] Each of these is called by the Arabs a Wa'ar, a word meaning rough, stony tract, and thus equivalent to Trachon. The latter, beyond the reach of civilisation, was little regarded, and the Lejá became known as the Trachon *par excellence*, as is proved by two inscriptions at either end of it—in Musmi'eh, the ancient Phaena, and at Bereke, each of which is called a chief town of the Trachon.[3] Now the Trachonitis was obviously the Trachon, *plus* some territory round it.[4] In the north it extended westward from the borders of the Lejá to the districts of Ulatha and Paneas in the northern Jaulan;[5] and in the south it bordered with Batanea,[6] but also touched Mons Alsadamus, the present Jebel Hauran.[7] Philo uses the name Trachonitis for the whole tetrarchy of Philip.[8]

[1] Strabo xvi. 2. 20. Τραχών=a rough, stony place.

[2] Wetzstein, *Reisebericht*, 36 ff.

[3] That in Musmieh is given by Burckhardt, p. 117, and Wadd., 2524; date about 225 A.D. That in Bereke is given by Wadd., 2396. The word used is μητροκωμια, which, since it is used twice, can scarcely be metropolis, as Merrill (*East of Jordan*, p. 20) translates, but is chief town of a group of villages.

[4] Josephus gives Τράχων in xv. *Antt.* x. 1 (cf. xvi. *Antt.* iv. 6), but in the parallel passage, i. *Wars*, xx. 4, Τραχωνῖτις.

[5] xv. *Antt.* x. 3. The Lejá itself could scarcely be described as bordering with Ulatha.

[6] Josephus, xvii. *Antt.* ii. 1, 2.

[7] Ptolemy (v. 15. 4) speaks of the Τραχωνῖται Ἄρραβες under the Mons Alsadamus.

[8] *Legat. ad Cajum*, 41. In the fourth century Eusebius places Trachonitis north-east of Boṣra, south of Damascus, and in the desert.

The portion of Philip's tetrarchy most difficult to define is the Ituræan. Did this cover or overlap Trachonitis, or was it a separate province? Luke's reference[1] is ambiguous, and we have no modern echo of the name to guide us.[2] In ancient times much is said of the Ituræi, a vigorous, emphatic breed of men, famous as archers. They are sung by Virgil and Lucan;[3] they fight with Cæsar in Africa;[4] they rattle with their arrows through the Forum itself, a defiant bodyguard for Mark Antony, till Cicero cries out against the insult to the Senate.[5] They were wild border-men between Syria and Arabia, to both of which they were reckoned by ancient writers. They were of an Ishmaelite stock,[6] like the Nabateans, and Strabo speaks of them as mixed with Arabs, and as inhabiting the same inaccessible highlands as the Arabs.[7] It is probably because of their semi-nomadic character that for long there was no region definitely called Ituræa; except once by Tacitus, the name is not used as a noun before the fourth century of our era, and doubtfully even then.[8]

(*e*) Ituræan.

[1] Luke iii. 1. See p. 541, n. 2.

[2] Jedur, جيدور, the name of the plain to the north of Hauran, has been quoted by many as equivalent to Ituræa (Robinson, Conder, etc.), but on what grounds it is impossible to see. The words are utterly different.

[3] *Georg.* ii. 448; *Pharsalia*, vii. 230, 514. Reland also quotes Vibius Sequester, *de Gentibus*: 'Ithyrei usu sagittae periti.'

[4] *Bell. Afric.* 20.

[5] 'They'—"the barbarians," as he calls them—'filled these very benches.' —*Philippics*, ii. 19, 112; xiii. 18.

[6] They are no doubt the same as the יטור, Jetur, of Gen. xxv. 15, mentioned with other Ishmaelite tribes of Arabs. Cf. 1 Chron. i. 30, v. 19.

[7] xvi. ii. 18: *τά μὲν οὖν ὀρεινὰ ἔχουσι πάντα Ἰτουραῖοί τε καὶ Ἄραβες.* 20: *ἔπειτα πρὸς τὰ Ἀράβων μέρη καὶ τῶν Ἰτουραίων ἀναμὶξ ὄρη δύσβατα.*

[8] Professor W. M. Ramsay, *Expositor* for January, February, April 1894. The only Greek passage in which Ituræa appears before the fourth century is Josephus xiii. *Antt.* xi. 3, according to the older editions: *Πολεμήσας Ἰτουραίαν.* But this should be as in Niese's edition *Ἰτουραίους*, which is given in some codices, and is more suitable to the grammar. See

But the tribe had a more or less distinct territory, on which, following the example of many other nomads of the Syrian border, they settled for a time, as a kingdom with a capital. Schürer has proved this territory to have been in the main Anti-Lebanon, their capital Chalcis in the Beka'; for a time the sway of their ruler extended over Lebanon also.[1] In 105 B.C. their territory bordered with Galilee,[2] and Schürer thinks their name covered also a part of Galilee ; but this is improbable. If the name thus spread down the slopes of Anti-Lebanon westwards to Galilee, it may also have extended down the same hill south-eastwards upon the districts of Paneas, and eastwards towards Trachonitis. The Ituræans were Arabs, and Strabo's statement that they inhabited inaccessible highlands along with Arabs must refer to districts east of Anti-Lebanon. We gather, then, that the Ituræans extended a good deal farther east than Schürer seems willing to admit. At the same time Strabo carefully distinguishes the two Trachons from the parts occupied by Ituræans and Arabs together. We may therefore

Expositor for March 1894, p. 236. This altered reading removes the last Greek precedent for interpreting τῆς Ἰτουραίας in Luke iii. 1 as a noun. Schürer still speaks of Ituræa as a noun, quoting Josephus, xiii. *Antt.* xi. 3 according to the reading Ἰτουραίαν.

[1] Schürer, *History of the Jewish People*, Eng. ed., div. i. vol. ii., Appendix i. : 'The History of Chalcis, Ituræa, and Abilene.' His evidence for Anti-Lebanon is fourfold. (1) Josephus, xiii. *Antt.* xi. 3, places the Ituræan country in the north of Galilee, in 105 B.C. (2) On an inscription of about 6 A.D. (alluded to by Prof. Ramsay, p. 147) Q. Æmilius Secundus relates that being sent by Quirinius 'adversus Ituræos in Libano monte castellum eorum cepi' (*Ephemeris Epigraphica*, 1881, 537-542). (3) Dion Cassius (xlix. 32) calls Lysanias king of the Ituræans, and the same writer (lix. 12) and Tacitus (*Ann.* xii. 23) call Soemus governor of the same ; but Lysanias ruled the Lebanon district from the sea to Damascus, with his capital at Chalcis, and Soemus was tetrarch at Lebanon (Josephus, *Vita*, xi.). (4) Above all, Strabo puts the Ituræans in Anti-Lebanon (xvi. ii. 16) : τὴν Ἰτουραίων ὀρεινήν. 18 : τινὰ καὶ ὀρεινά ἐν οἷς ἡ Χαλκὶς ὥσπερ ἀκρόπολις τοῦ Μασσύου (*i.e.* the Beka').

[2] xiii. *Antt.* xi. 3. See p. 414.

conclude that the Ituræans, though scattered towards the Trachonitis, occupied a distinct territory. About 25 B.C., however, part of the Ituræan domains on the south of Hermon was under the same ruler as Trachonitis, Zenodorus by name.[1] Again, in 20 B.C., that same part of the Ituræan territory and Trachonitis were both under Herod ; and from 4 B.C. to 34 A.D. they were both under Philip.[2] Now, it is not impossible that the names of territories which bordered each other and were under the same ruler should have overlapped. As a fact, we have seen that Philo called all Philip's tetrarchy by the name of Trachonitis. Conversely, did the name 'Ituræan' spread across Trachonitis ? We have no evidence that it did during the first century. But the fact is possible. Within the last few years the Druzes emigrating from Lebanon have bestowed their name on the Jebel Hauran, which is as often called the Jebel Druz. The Ituræans might have effected a similar transference of their name to the Trachonitis, especially in 6 A.D., when the Romans captured their seats in Anti-Lebanon.[3] At the same time Strabo, writing after this event, still keeps the Ituræan territory and Trachonitis quite distinct. The questions, therefore, whether Luke meant to signify by his words two distinct portions of Philip's tetrarchy, or two equivalent or overlapping names for it ; and whether, on either of these interpretations of his words, he was correct—are questions to which the geographical data of the first century supply us with no

[1] xv. *Antt.* x. 1 ; i. *Wars*, xx. 4. 'Zenodorus, who had leased the house of Lysanias, king of the Ituræans' (Dion Cassius, xlix. 32), which included Ulatha and Paneas and the country round about.

[2] In whose tetrarchy 'a certain part of the house of Zenodorus' represents the Ituræan region south and south-east of Hermon.

[3] See previous page, note 1, No. (2).

certain answer. It is quite true that Eusebius in the fourth century makes Ituræa and Trachonitis equivalent; but the name Ituræa was dead by his day, and his evidence cannot be ranked with that of the first century.[1]

Behind Ituræa, on the Upper Abana or Barada, lay Abilene, which Luke gives as the tetrarchy of Lysanias,[2] and in the Beka' Chalcis, but these are beyond our limits.

'Arabia'—The Nabateans.

In New Testament times the whole region to the east and south of Eastern Palestine was known as Arabia. The population were an Arab tribe or tribes known as the Nabateans,[3] who at the beginning of the third century before Christ had settled down partly to agriculture and partly to commerce. About 100 B.C. they became a powerful kingdom. Their capital was Petra,[4] but their influence extended all round Syria, from Damascus, which fell into their hands in 87 B.C., after they had defeated the Syrians,[5] to Gaza,[6] and far in to the centre of Arabia.[7] Their inscriptions are scattered over all Eastern Palestine, where they had many settlements, and in Arabia, but have even been discovered in Italy, proving the extent of their trade.[8] Their relations with Rome we shall follow later on.[9]

[1] This is abridged from my article in the *Expositor* for March 1894. See further, p. 554.

[2] Luke iii. 1. The capital of Abilene was Abila, the ruins of which are still to be found at Suk on the Barada.

[3] Identified by some with the Nebaioth of the Old Testament.

[4] Josephus, xiv. *Antt.* iv. 5; xvii. *Antt.* iii. 2, etc. etc.; i. *Wars*, vi. 2, etc.; Strabo xvi. ii. 34; iv. 2, 18; especially 21 ff.; Pliny, *H.N.* vi. 28.

[5] Josephus, xiii. *Antt.* xv. 2; i. *Wars*, iv. 7. [6] *Ibid.* xiii. *Antt.* xiii. 3.

[7] At Hejra, or Medain-es-Salih, on the Hajj route to Mecca, there are great numbers of Nabatean tombs and inscriptions. Doughty, *Arabia Deserta*, vol. i. *Corpus Inscript. Semiticarum*, Pars II. tom. i. 183 ff.

[8] *C.I.S.*, as in previous note; also for the Greek ones, Waddington.

[9] Chapters xxvi. and xxix.

IV. In Old Testament Times.

When we pass back into the Old Testament we again find Eastern Palestine, now known as Over-Jordan or

'Abarim.

'Abarim,[1] divided into three parts. But the lines of division are not now Yarmuk and Jabbok, but Yarmuk and that line twenty-five miles to the south of Jabbok, which divides the table-land of Moab from the ridges to the north of it.[2] All on the south of this to the Arnon is Mishôr or Table-land ; all to the north of it, as far as the Yarmuk is Gilead; and all to the north of Yarmuk is Bashan.[3]

(1) The Mishôr.

The Mishôr,[4] or Table-land, covered the southern half of the Belka'. It was sometimes called the Mîshôr of Medeba,[5] which town on a high mound is conspicuous across the whole of it. It was also the Sharon of Eastern Palestine.[6]

(2) Gilead.

The rest of the Belka', from Heshbon to the Jabbok, formed the southern half of Gilead ;[7] the other half lay between Jabbok and Yarmuk,[8] and was therefore equivalent to the modern district of 'Ajlun.[9]

[1] עבר ירדן, sometimes with the addition of מזרחה, or eastward. עברים= men or regions *on the other side.*

[2] Practically coincident with the Wady Hesban.

[3] For these three divisions, see Deut. iii. 10; iv. 43; cf. Josh. xx. 8; xiii. 9.

[4] המישור, Auth. Eng. Ver., *plain country*, or plain ; Rev. Ver., *plain* ; margin, *table-land.*

[5] Josh. xiii. 9, 16.

[6] Sharon, from the same root as מישור, 1 Chron. v. 16. Neubauer, *Géog. du Talmud*, 47 ff.

[7] Deut. iii. 12 : *half Mount Gilead.* Josh. xii. 2 : *half Gilead even to the river Jabbok.*

[8] Deut. iii. 13 : *the rest of Gilead.* Josh. xii. 5, cf. 1 Kings iv. 19.

[9] P. 536. The Yarmuk was the northern border, for (1) the country of Gad, which was practically Gilead, ran up to the Sea of Galilee (Deut. iii. 16); and (2) Gilead marched with Geshur and Maachah (Josh. xiii. 11). These two probably lay in the Jaulan.

The whole region was called Gilead, the Land of Gilead, and Mount Gilead,[1] the last of which names still survives upon the long ridge south of the Jabbok, the Jebel Jela'ad.[2] On one occasion Gilead is used for Gad.[3] But with that singular elasticity which characterises all names across Jordan, Gilead is at least twice used of all Eastern Palestine to Dan.[4] This seems to be the sense of the word in the books of Maccabees;[5] Josephus uses it with both the narrower and the wider application.[6]

(3) Bashan.

Bashan, or The Bashan,[7] had its eastern border on Salcah, the present Salkhat, the nearest town of any importance to the Arabian desert,[8] and included Edrei,[9] Ashtaroth,[10] the present Tell-Ashtar, and

[1] In the Hexateuch JE uses all three names. *Gilead*, Num. xxxii. 26 (J); *Land of Gilead*, Num. xxxii. 1 (JE), Josh. xvii. 5, 6 (JE); *Mount Gilead*, Gen. xxxi. 21 (E), 25 (J). D always uses *Gilead* (Deut. ii. 36, iii. 15, 16, xxxiv. 1 (D or R?); Josh. xii. 2, 5, xiii. 11), except once, when it uses *Mount Gilead* (Deut. iii. 12). P uses both *Gilead* (Josh. xiii. 25, 31) and *Land of Gilead* (Num. xxxii. 29; Josh. xxii. 9, 13, 15, 32).

[2] Burckhardt, *Syria*, 348.

[3] Judges v. 17, cf. 1 Sam. xiii. 7.

[4] Deut. xxxiv. 1; Josh. xxii. 9, 13, 15, 32.

[5] Γαλαὰδ, 1 Macc. v. 1, 17, etc. Γαλααδιτις, v. 20. It excludes Ammon and Jazer to the south, but includes part of Hauran, cf. xiii. 22; Judith i. 8; xv. 5.

[6] i. *Antt.* xix. 11. The hill Gulad, the country Γαλαδηνη; iv. *Antt.* v. 3; vi. *Antt.* v. 1; ix. *Antt.* viii. 1: Γαλααδῖτις, so also LXX.; xii. *Antt.* viii. 2, 3; in 3 for 'Galilee' read 'Gilead'; xiii. *Antt.* xiii. 4.

[7] The article is used in all historical statements defining the kingdom of Og, who is always king of *the* Bashan (Num. xxi. 33; Deut. i. 4, etc.; even Psalms cxxxv. 11, cxxxvi. 20), or the territories of Manasseh (Josh. xvii. 1, xxi. 6, etc.) except 1 Chron. v. 23; also sometimes in poetry (Deut. xxxiii. 20), and in prophecy (Isa. ii. 13; Jer. xxii. 20; l. 19; Amos iv. 1). But more often in prophecy and poetry it is omitted. Psalm xxii. 13 (Eng. 12); lxviii. 17, 23 (Eng. 16, 22); Isa. xxxiii. 9; Ezek. xxvii. 6, xxxix. 18; Micah vii. 14; Nahum i. 4; Zech. xi. 2.

[8] Deut. iii. 10; Josh. xii. 4, xiii. 11; 1 Chron. v. 11.

[9] Deut. iii. 10; Josh. ix. 10.

[10] Deut. i. 4; Josh. ix. 10, xii. 4, xiii. 12, 31.

Golan.[1] That is to say, Bashan proper covered the land known in Greek times as Batanea, the southern end of the great plain of Hauran.[2] In this narrower application the name does not appear to have come west to Jordan, for between it and that river lay Geshur and Maachah.[3] But in a wider sense Bashan extended to Hermon, and covered all the land north of Gilead.[4] The long high edge of mountain to the east of the Lake of Galilee is the Bashan which the prophets so often couple with Carmel. *Dan*, says a poet, *is a lion's whelp* ; *he leapeth from Bashan.*[5] This carries the name to the very foot of Hermon. Whether Hermon itself was known as the *mount* or *mountains of Bashan*, or whether the latter name designates the whole of that eastern range, is uncertain. The poet says, *mountains of bold heights*[6] *are the mount of Bashan.* This epithet, not applicable to the long, level edge of the table-land, might refer either to the lofty triple summits of Hermon,[7] or to the many broken cones that are scattered across Bashan, and so greatly differ in their volcanic form from the softer, less imposing heights of Western Palestine.[8]

Hills of Bashan.

[1] Deut. iv. 43 ; Josh. xx. 8, xxi. 27.

[2] 1 Chron. v. 23 seems to limit Bashan to the south of this plain.

[3] Josh. xii. 4, xiii. 11, 13, where it is implied that Geshur and Maachah were west of Bashan,—probably occupying the present Jaulan. Cf. Guthe, *Z.D.P.V.* xii. 232.

[4] Deut. iv. 43 ; 2 Kings x. 33.

[5] Deut. xxxiii. 22.

[6] Psalm lxviii. 17. גַּבְנֻנִּים, *protuberances, bulgings, humps* ; גִּבֵּן, hump-backed, Lev. xxi. 20. In the Targums גיבנא is a hill-top, גְּבִינֵי, eyebrows.

[7] So Olshausen, and recently Baethgen ; cf. p. 477.

[8] So Delitzsch. Wetzstein compares גבנון with the Syriac gabnun and the Arabic gabulun, 'a roof with a gable end.' He is doubtless wrong when (followed by Cheyne) he confines the general term *mount* = range, or *mountains of Bashan*, to the Jebel Hauran, even though it should be true that the Hill of Salmon, quoted in the previous verse, be the same as the name Ptolemy gives to that hill, the Mons Asalmanos (v. 15). Cf. Guthe, *Z.D.P.V.* xii. 231.

Within Bashan lay 'Argob, probably equivalent to our word 'Glebe.'[1] It bordered on Geshur and Maachah,[2] and contained threescore fortified cities. Sometimes 'Argob seems equivalent to the kingdom of Og in Bashan, and sometimes to all Bashan. But the name which is always given it, of The Measured Lot[3] of Argob, implies that it was some well-defined district within Bashan.[4] For the same reason many[5] have thought it to be the Lejá, which lies so well marked off from the surrounding country, but for such an identification there is no further evidence. Nor was the Argob identical with the Havoth-Jair, or *Tent-villages of Jair.*[6] Of the latter we have two different accounts: one that they were *camps* taken by Jair, the son of Manasseh, in the days of Moses;[7] the other that they were thirty cities belonging to the thirty sons of Jair, a Gileadite, one of the minor Judges.[8] The first of these accounts has been mixed with the account of the conquest of Argob in a verse in Deuteronomy, which bears proof of having been deliberately altered to effect this.[9] Argob and Havoth-Jair were not the same; Argob

'Argob.

Havoth-Jair.

[1] ארגוב or הארגוב, probably from רגב, a clod.

[2] Deut. iii. 14.

[3] הבל.

[4] It is always given as in Bashan. Deut. iii. 4, 13 f.; 1 Kings iv. 13.

[5] So Porter, Conder, Henderson, *P.E.F.* map.

[6] חות יאיר. חוּה is probably the same as the Arabic حِواء, hiwâ', pl. احوية, 'Ahwîyât, the Bedawee goat hair-tent, applied also to a collection of houses. Freytag, *sub voce.* Hence probably the Hivites, חִוִּי, got their name.

[7] Num. xxxii. 41. From an uncertain source, perhaps E.

[8] Judges x. 3, 5.

[9] Deut. iii. 14. I do not think we can say with Dillmann and others that this verse is a sheer insertion (along with the two following); for a sheer insertion would not bear marks of having been altered from something else,

was a region full of walled and gated cities; the Havoth-Jair were a collection of Bedouin camps. But the absolute proof of their difference is that a passage in the First Book of Kings expressly separates them, placing the camps of Jair in Gilead, and Argob and its cities in Bashan.[1]

The only other Old Testament name in Eastern Palestine which it is necessary to mention is Hauran or Havran of Ezekiel, which he gives, along with Damascus and Gilead, as comprising Eastern Palestine.[2] There is little doubt that this is the same name as we have in Auranitis and the modern Hauran, which also, like the Hebrew, is a proper name, and ought not to have the definite article attached to it. It is at least worth noting that a district lying so hollow between mountains, and to part of which the Arabs at the present day give the name of their hollow hearth, en-Nukra, should

Hauran—'Hollow.'

as this verse does. It tells us that *Jair took the Hebel of Argob*, singular, *and called them* plural. This must mean that a plural noun originally stood in place of *the Hebel* or *lot of Argob* (*them*, of course, cannot possibly be explained by *the coasts* of the intervening clause). This can only have been the *tent-villages of Gilead*, or some such expression. How clumsily the change has been made is seen from the fact that Bashan, אֶת־הַבָּשָׁן, has not been inserted in its proper place, which is earlier in the sentence, but now stands where it is quite ungrammatical. But even if either the above explanation or any other that has been given of the origin of this verse be not correct, the text is so evidently confused that we could not possibly prefer it to the clear evidence of verse 4 in the same chapter, which says the towns of Argob were not Havoth, tent-villages, but walled and gated cities; or to 1 Kings iv. 13, which separates Argob from Havoth-Jair, reckoning the former to Bashan, the latter to Gilead. But if for this reason we must put aside Deut. iii. 14, we must also strike out at least the last clause of Josh. xiii. 30, which calls the tent-villages of Jair cities, and, in contradiction to 2 Kings iv. 13, puts them in Bashan. Josh. xiii. 30 is from P.

[1] 1 Kings iv. 13. Here, however, it is only right to say that some regard the words, the *villages of Jair the son of Manasseh in Gilead*, as an insertion. Still we know from other passages that the Havoth-Jair were in Gilead, but Argob is always placed in Bashan.

[2] Ezek. xlvii. 16, 18, חַוְרָן.

have a title capable of being split up into *Havr* or *Hawr*, meaning a hole, and *-an*, a common termination of place-names.

These, then, are the greater divisions of Eastern Palestine, with their names respectively to-day, at the Crusades, in New Testament times, and in Old Testament times. We may sum them up in the following comparative table :—

Name To-day.	At the Crusades.	In New Test. Times.	In Old Test. Times.
WHOLE TERRITORY.			
...	Oultre-Jourdain.	Cœle-Syria.	Over-Jordan. Abarim.
(*a*) DAMASCUS.			
El-Ghuta (geogr.) Liwa of Damascus (administrative).	... ...	Damascus.	Aram of Damascus.
(*b*) NORTH OF THE JARMUK.			
HAURAN (Mutaseraflik of).	...	TETRARCHY OF PHILIP (+ Decapolis, etc.).	ALL BASHAN. (+ Half-Gilead).
(1) Jaulan.	Suwete or	Gaulanitis.	Geshur (?). Ma'achah (?). The town Golan.
(2) Hauran proper.	Suhete.	Auranitis.	Hauran (Ezekiel).
(3) Leja.	...	Trachon(itis).	(?)
(4) Ard-el-Betheniyeh.	...	Batanea (?).	Bashan, in narrower sense
(5) En-Nukra.	...	...	Argob (?)
(6) Jebel Hauran or Druz.	...	Mount Ασαλμανος.	Mount Bashan (?)
(*c*) BETWEEN JARMUK AND JABBOK.			
(7) 'Ajlun.	...	Region of Decapolis, with part of Peræa.	Half-Gilead.
(*d*) BETWEEN JABBOK AND ARNON.			
The BELKA'.	...	Peræa.	Half-Gilead. The Mîshôr.
(*e*) SOUTH OF ARNON.			
Practical continuation of the Belka'.	Seigneurie of Krak and Montreal.	Nabatean territory.	Moab.

FURTHER NOTE ON THE ITURÆANS AND TRACHONITIS —IN REPLY TO PROFESSOR RAMSAY.

(*To continue n.* 1 *on p.* 547).

Professor Ramsay has done me the honour to reply to my *Expositor* article (March 1894) in a kind article (April 1894, pp. 288 n. 1, 298-302). In reply I have space only for the following :—

1. In answer to his note on p. 288,—I am his ally in so far as I have produced some evidence for the *possibility* of his theory of the overlapping of Trachonitis and the Ituræan name (see above, p. 546).

2. I repeat that (leaving the disputed Luke iii. 1 aside) there is no evidence of the *fact* of such an overlapping in the first century, except Eusebius. In his reply Professor Ramsay has not attempted to supply such evidence.

3. My objection to Eusebius is not so much to his errors as a geographer for his own day (Ramsay, 301) as that his date in the fourth century makes his testimony about the first century inferior to that of a first century writer like Strabo, who carefully distinguishes the Trachons from the 'parts of the Ituræans.'

4. I cannot but think that Professor Ramsay has been led to extend the Ituræans as far east as over the Trachon by his theory (which, on p. 300, he wrongly imputes to me) that 'the Ituræi were the one warlike tribe of the whole region.' Most certainly they were not. To the east were other Arabs distinct from them, but partly mixed with them (Strabo xvi. ii. 18, 20). And there were the Nabateans (if these be distinct, which is doubtful, from Strabo's Arabs) in possession, when the Romans were not, of Damascus, and in alliance with the Arabs of the Trachon (see below, p. 617).

5. When Professor Ramsay says that 'the true home of such a race (*i.e.* as the Ituræans) is, he ventures to think, *not* the long-settled and well-governed land between Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon,' he ignores (*a*) how often in Syria such a land has been seized and governed by such a tribe ; and (*b*) what abundant evidence we have that Ituræans did settle on Anti-Lebanon and in the Beka', with Chalcis as their capital. On this Schürer seems to me to be absolutely correct (see above, p. 545, especially n. 1).

CHAPTER XXVI

MOAB AND THE COMING OF ISRAEL



For this Chapter consult Maps I. and III.

MOAB AND THE COMING OF ISRAEL

THE passage of the Arnon brings Israel clearly into light upon Eastern Palestine. We have the names of the stations of their journey before this, but the sites of these are not now discernible,[1] and even the Brook Zered, which is given as the limit of the wilderness, did not mark the beginning of the Promised Land.[2] The Arnon is afterwards drawn as the southern frontier of Israel on this side of Jordan. Aroer on its banks was the Beersheba of the East,[3] and accordingly we find Israel, as soon as they cross it, entering upon their warfare for their heritage.

Israel's Passage of the Arnon.

That Israel's fighting began after the passage of the Arnon, was due to a recent change in the political disposition of Eastern Palestine. Properly all the country from Jabbok to Arnon belonged, northwards to Ammon, southwards to Moab. But shortly before Israel's arrival, Sihon, an Amorite king from Western

Sihon's Conquests.

[1] Num. xxi. 10 f. Oboth, somewhere on the flinty plateau to the east of Edom, the Ard Suwwan or Flint Ground, Arabia Petræa; see Doughty, *Arabia Deserta*, i. 28, 29. Ije-Abarim (so called to distinguish it from the Iim of Judah, Jo. xv. 29), *in the wilderness in front of Moab towards the sunrising.*

[2] The Zered cannot be the great wady rising east from the south end of the Dead Sea to the Hajj Station, Kula't el Jarâhy, as marked on the *P.E.F.* red. map, 1890; but must have lain nearer Arnon, either in the W. 'Ain Feranjy, or the Seil S'aideh, a branch of the Arnon (so Dillmann). But all sites in this region are problematical.

[3] Deut. ii. 36, iii. 8, 16; Josh. xiii. 16.

Palestine, had crossed the Jordan, and driving Moab southwards over Arnon, and Ammon eastwards to the sources of the Jabbok, had founded a kingdom for himself between these two rivers. Israel had come up the eastern border of Moab, but, in order to reach Jordan, was forced to strike westward across Sihon's territory. Moses sent and asked for rights of passage. Sihon refused, and Israel prepared to fight him. They were now upon some branch of the Arnon, but high up it. Their route had perhaps followed the present Hajj road.[1]

The Arnon as a frontier.

The Arnon is the present Wady Mojib, an enormous trench across the plateau of Moab. It is about 1700 feet deep, and two miles broad from edge to edge of the cliffs which bound it, but the floor of the valley over which the stream winds is only forty yards wide.[2] About thirteen miles from the Dead Sea the trench divides into two branches, one running north-east, the other south-south-east, and each of them again dividing into two. The whole plateau up to the desert is thus not only cut across, but up and down, by deep ravines, and a very difficult frontier is formed. You see at once why the political boundary of Eastern Palestine has generally lain here,[3] and not farther south. The southern branch, the present Seil Sa'ideh, called also Safiah, is the principal one,[4] but all the branches probably carried the name Arnon from the main valley right up to the desert. It is not *the valley* but *the valleys* of Arnon, which are

[1] Num. xxi. 21, where the embassy to Sihon for permission to journey through his land is related *after* the list of the stations on the journey; the Deuteronomist (ii. 26) states that the embassy was sent from the wilderness of Kedemoth.

[2] Burckhardt, *Syria*, 372.

[3] Except in the time of the Crusades, and at the present day.

[4] Burckhardt, p. 373. It carries the name Mojib up to the desert.

named in the ancient fragment of song celebrating Israel's passage :—

> '*Waheb in Sufah* [we passed] *and the valleys of Arnon,*
> *And the cliff of the valleys, which stretches to Ar's seat,*
> *And leans on the border of Moab.*'[1]

The first words are obscure. Sufah may survive in Safiah.[2] The *cliffs or declivities* of all these Moab valleys are impressive, and every traveller speaks of them.[3] 'Ar is not Rabbath Moab,[4] which lies far south of the Arnon, but 'Ar, or 'Ir, of Moab, now indiscoverable, which stood on Moab's border.[5] On the north bank, just before the valley divides, stand the ruins of 'Ar'âr, *the Aroer on the lip of the valley of Arnon,* which we have already called the Beersheba of Eastern Palestine.[6]

From the Upper Arnon, then,—the Deuteronomist calls the place the *Wilderness of Kedemoth,*[7]—Israel sent to Sihon for permission to cross his territory, and Sihon refusing came out to offer them battle at Jahaz, a strong place in the neighbourhood of Kedemoth,[8] that is, in the south-east corner of Sihon's territory. The result was the total defeat of Sihon, and the occu-

The war with Sihon.

[1] Num. xxi. 14, 15. For Waheb (in the accusative case) LXX. read Σωοβ.

[2] صفيه

[3] Cf. especially Burckhardt, pp. 400, 401. Cliff is אשד, a singular not else where found, but in the plural אשדות, frequently used for the declivities of hills.

[4] As in *P.E.F.* red. map, 1890, and Murray's *Guide.*

[5] So also Dillmann. It may be the Mehatit el Haj.

[6] P. 557.

[7] Deut. ii. 26, 27.

[8] Jahaz, יהץ, Num. xxi. 23 ; Deut. ii. 32 ; Isa. xv. 4 ; Jer. xlviii. 34 ; but Jahzah, יהצה, Josh. xiii. 18 ; xxi. 36 ; Judges xi. 20 ; Jer. xlviii. 21 ; and 1 Chron. vi. 63—is mentioned twice with Kedemoth, Josh. xiii. 18 ; xxi. 36 f., which since the wilderness is called after it must have lain east ; twice seems to be mentioned as a limit of Moab, distant from Heshbon, Isa. xv. 4; Jer. xlviii. 34 ; and once is placed on the plateau of Moab, *Ib.* 21. On the Moabite Stone, lines 19, 20, the name is spelt like the shorter Hebrew form, and the place is given as a fortress and seemingly near Daibon.

pation of his country by the Israelites. *Wherefore they that sing taunt-songs say*,—the following 'mashal' opens with the taunt of the victorious Israel to the Amorites to return and rebuild their city (ver. 27), then (vv. 28, 29) describes how the Amorites had come to be there, namely, by previously taking the country from Moab, and returns (ver. 30) to the keynote of Israel's own victory—

27 *Come ye to Heshbon!*
Let the city of Sihon be built and set up again!

28 *For fire had*[1] *gone forth from Heshbon,*
Flame from the fortress of Sihon,
Had devoured 'Ar of Moab,
And consumed[2] *the high places of Arnon.*

29 *Woe to thee, Moab!*
Thou art undone, people of Chemosh!
He hath given up his sons to be runaways,
His daughters to captivity,
To the king of the Amorites, Sihon!

30 *But we shot at them, Heshbon was undone—unto Daibon,*
And we laid waste unto Nobah (?) *which lies on the desert.*[3]

Is it historical?

The war against Sihon has been declared by some critics to be unhistorical, and they refer the song to a conquest of Moab by Israel in the ninth century. Their reasons are that the war is narrated in only one of the documents of the Pentateuch, that the

[1] The verb, from its position in the clause, must be rendered by the pluperfect.

[2] So LXX. κατέπιεν as if בעלה. Hebrew text reads בעלי: *Baals or Lords of the high places of Arnon.*

[3] The text is here very uncertain. The above rendering is that of Dillmann, based on the Peschito. Daibon is the proper spelling, as we see from דיבן of the Moabite Stone. Nophah is unknown (there is a Nâîfeh south-east of Ma'in), but there was a Nobah to the north-east of Heshbon near Jogbehah (Judges viii. 11). This, of course, would be inconsistent with the words, אשר עד מידבא, for Medeba lies south of Hesbon. But the Peschito reads אשר על מדבר, which is on the desert. LXX. read the last line καὶ αἱ γυναῖκες ἔτι προσεξέκαυσαν πῦρ ἐπὶ Μωάβ.

song traces an invasion from north to south, not from south to north, and that if the words *king of the Amorites, Sihon*,[1] be omitted, the whole reads clearly as the account of an invasion by Israel of Moab, beginning at Heshbon and extending to the Arnon. But the document which tells the story is the oldest of all the documents ; its date, at the latest in the eighth century, forbids that its authors could have confused a war in the ninth century with one in the fourteenth ; and it is not contradicted by anything in the other documents. Moreover, such an invasion of Eastern Palestine by the Amorites of the west was possible ; while it is impossible to understand, if the facts were not as stated, any motive for the invention of the tale.[2]

Israel's passage of 'the Plateau.'

Sihon being defeated, and Heshbon overthrown, the country was now clear for the advance of the great camp of Israel from the Arnon. Their goal was the Jordan, at the north end of the Dead Sea, and their nearest way lay first over the treeless Plateau, which stretches northward from Arnon, and then down one of the numerous glens which break from the west of Heshbon into the 'Arabah. The Plateau is without springs, and Israel's stations upon it would be determined by the three water-courses which cut it between the Arnon and Heshbon. One itinerary gives us four stations : Be'er, where Israel had to dig for water, and sang the Song of the Well, some undiscovered spot near the Upper Arnon ;[3] Mattanah ;[4] Nahaliel, or the

[1] Num. xxi. 29. [2] See Appendix on 'The Wars with Sihon and Og.'

[3] Num. xxi. 16-18. In 18*b* read (with the LXX.) *from Be'er* instead of *from the wilderness.* Be'er cannot be Daibôn, Conder, *P.E.F.Q.* 1882, p. 86 ; for Israel would not need to dig water there, and seems to have passed to the eastward.

[4] The only names to-day even remotely echoing this name are Umm Denich and Butmah, the name of the upper course of the Wady Waleh.

Valley of God, which is not an unfit name for the Wady Zerka Ma'in with its healing springs;[1] Bamoth,[2] or High Places, which may be represented by any of the ancient cromlechs and altars about the Wady Jideid.[3]

At this point Israel were about to exchange the desert view, which had been their horizon during forty years, for the first full sight of the Promised Land. In the itinerary we have been following the next station is given as *the glen that is in the field of Moab, by the headland of Pisgah, which looketh out over Jeshimon.*

The edge of 'the Plateau.'

During their journey over the Table-land, Israel had no outlook westward across the Dead Sea. For westward the Plateau rises a little and shuts out all view, but on the other side of the rise it breaks up into promontories slightly lower than itself, which run out over the 'Arabah and Dead Sea Valley, and afford a view of all Western Palestine. Seen from below, or from across Jordan, these headlands, rising three or four thousand feet by slope and precipice from the valley, stand out like separate mountains. But eastward they do not rise from the Moab Plateau—they are simply projections or capes of the latter, and you ride from it on to them without experiencing any difference of level, except, it may be, a decline of a few feet. Israel, passing Bamoth, had arrived at the inland end of one of these headlands—almost certainly that which breaks from the Plateau half way between Heshbon and Medeba, and runs out, under the name of Neba, nearly

Nebo and Pisgah.

[1] Conder, *ibid.* See p. 571, note 2.

[2] Not *Bamoth in the valley*, as the *P.E.F. Red. Map*, 1890, calls it (also Conder, *P.E.F.Q.*, 1882, p. 86), following the mistaken rendering of the English version of Num. xxi. 20. Read *from Bamoth* to *the glen* or *ravine*.

[3] Conder, *P.E.F.Q.*, 1886, pp. 85 ff.; *Heth and Moab*, 145 ff.

opposite the north end of the Dead Sea. The ridge is about two miles long, and its level top perhaps half a mile broad. It is of flinty limestone, mostly barren, yet where it breaks from the Plateau, fertile, and, on the July day we crossed, this end of it was covered with yellow corn and reapers. Before you descend from the rising ground, which alone divides it from the Plateau, you instinctively seek the nearest high mound for a last view backwards. There is the great plain of Moab, southward broken only by the eminence of Medeba and the hollow of Arnon, but in front of you it rolls away unbroken, unvaried, save by the shadows of a few clouds on the featureless hillocks, into the infinite East. You turn westward, descending through the corn-fields, and traverse the long flinty ridge to the limestone knoll upon it, which bears the name of Râs, or Head, of Neba. You have lost the eastern view, but all Western Palestine is in sight; only the hither side of the Jordan Valley is still invisible, and north and south the view is hampered by the near hills. Follow the ridge to its second summit, the Râs Siaghah, and you find yourself on a headland, which, though lower than Râs Neba, stands free of the rest of the range. The whole of the Jordan Valley is now open to you, from Engedi, beyond which the mists become impenetrable, to where, on the north, the hills of Gilead seem to meet those of Ephraim. The Jordan flows below: Jericho is visible beyond. Over Gilead, it is said, Hermon can be seen in clear weather, but the heat hid it from us. The view is almost that described as the last on which the eyes of Moses rested, the higher hills of Western Palestine shutting out all possibility of a sight of the sea. It is certainly the position described in the

itinerary : *the head of the Pisgah, which looketh down or over upon the face of Jeshimon*, whether this latter be the wilderness of Judæa immediately across the Dead Sea, or the long stretch of waste-land on the east of Jordan, just below our point of view.[1]

'The Wells of Moses.'

It was probably the well-watered glen on the north of the Neba-Siaghah ridge, the present Wady 'Ayûn Musa, which Israel descended and camped in. It would depend on the season of the year whether the host stayed for some time about its plentiful waters, now called the 'Wells of Moses,' or at once descended to the warm plains of Shittim beside the Jordan. One thing is certain ; this journey, though it is described in the Book of Numbers before the war with Sihon, must have come after the latter. No host, so large and cumbered as this, could have ventured down

[1] *Looketh down* or *over upon*=נִשְׁקָפָה, a verb used of God looking down from heaven, Ps. cii. 20 (19) ; and of men especially, looking out of, and down from, a window, 2 Sam. xxiv. 20 ; Gen. xxvi. 8 ; Song vi. 10. The chief idea seems to be not looking forth, but looking down, and, if this be so, then the Jeshimon of our present passage will not be the wilderness of Judæa, but the long tract of barren land east of Jordan, north of the Dead Sea, in which בית ישמות lay, Josh. xii. 3 ; xiii. 20 ; Ezek. xxv. 9. Cf. Dillmann *ad locum*.

Pisgah is always used with the article, either in the connection ראש הפסגה, *summit of the Pisgah* (Num. xxi. 20 ; xxiii. 14 (JE) ; Deut. iii. 27 ; xxxiv. 1), or as אשדות הפסגה or אשדת, *slopes of the Pisgah* (Deut. iii. 17 ; iv. 49 ; Josh. xii. 3, a Deuteronomic passage ; and Josh. xiii. 20, probably from the Priestly Writing). The ראש is described as *looking down on Jeshimon, over against Jericho, and commanding a view of Shittim*. With regard to the etymology of the word it is plain that the name Siaghah, now attached to the foreland, has no connection with Pisgah, the letters of which, or their equivalents, are found in the name Râs Feshkah, a headland exactly on the other side of the Dead Sea. The name Mount Nebo, הר נבו, is found only in two passages, both of them probably Deuteronomic : Dt. xxxii. 49, where it is given as one of the Abarim range, over against Jericho, and Dt. xxxiv. 1, where it is said to be the same as Pisgah, LXX. Ναβαῦ. The town of Nebo is given in Num. xxxii. 3, 38 ; xxxiii. 47 Isa. xv. 2 ; Jer. xlviii. 1, 22 ; 1 Chron. v. 8, generally next to Baal-Meon.

any of the glens from the Plateau to the Jordan before their own warriors had occupied Heshbon, for Heshbon, standing above them, commands these glens.

The burial of Moses.

To Nebo, again, the sacred story brings Moses to close his life—again to that long platform where the host, which he had guided through the desert for forty years, first lost their desert horizon, and saw the Promised Land open before them. And somewhere below the platform the Lord buried Moses—*in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth Peor, but no man knoweth of his sepulchre to this day.* Between the streams that in these valley bottoms spring full-born from the rocks, and the merry corn-fields on the Plateau of Moab above, there are some thousand feet of slopes and gullies, where no foot comes, the rock is crumbling, and utter silence reigns, save for the west wind moaning through the thistles. Here Moses was laid. Who would wish to know the exact spot? The whole region is a sepulchre.

The stations of Balaam.

Nebo and the neighbouring hills were also the stations and altars of Balaam. Balak brought him from the Arnon, and first they took up their position at Bamoth-Baal, which must have lain back from the edge of the hills, for Balaam could see from it only the farther edge of Israel's camp in the plain below.[1] The seer's second station was in the field of Zophim, or *the Gazers*, which is given as on *the head of Pisgah*,[2] where seven altars were built. The third station was *the head of Peor that looketh down on Jeshimon*—the same index as is given for Nebo itself, yet probably a point still

[1] Num. xxii. 41. Bamoth-Baal was perhaps identical with Bamoth the station of Israel, xxi. 19. On the whole subject of Balaam's altars see Conder, *P.E.F.Q.* 1882; and *Heth and Moab.*

[2] Num. xxiii. 14.

nearer to the plain of Shittim.[1] The places at which Balaam took his stand and looked for omens were all probably sanctuaries. The range is covered with the names of deity—Baal, Nebo, Peor. Nor could there be more suitable platforms for altars, nor more open posts for observing the stars or the passage of clouds, or the flight of birds across the great hollow of the 'Arabah.[2] *The field of Gazers* was rightly named. To-day the hills have many ancient altars and circles of stones upon them.[3]

The war with Midian.

Besides the distant campaign against Og, king of Bashan,[4] Israel waged war—impossible to avoid in those desert-bordering regions—with the Midianites.[5] No geographical data are given.

The rest of the geography of Moab carries us into the period of the kings and prophets.

Reuben and Gad.

The territory of Sihon between the Arnon and the Jabbok, and as far east as Jazer, the border of the children of Ammon, was divided between the two tribes of Reuben and Gad. These high, fresh moors, the dust of whose paths still bear no foot-marks save those of sheep and cattle, had attracted the two tribes, which, not crossing the Jordan, failed, like the others, to rise from the pastoral to the agricultural stage of life. They asked Moses for the land, and he divided it between them. The division is hard to define: we have

[1] פעור, a mountain of this name is not elsewhere found. ביתפעור, Josh. xiii. 20, is given with Ashdoth Pisgah and Beth-Jeshimoth, which means probably that it lay well down towards the plain. *Onomasticon* gives ὄρος Φογώρ by the ascent from Livias (Tell Râme) and Βεθφογώρ, six Roman miles east from Livias.

[2] Cf. Num. xxiii. 23, where enchantment and divination should be *omens*, as of birds and clouds (cf. xxiv. 1, *he went not, as at other times, to seek for omens*), and *soothsaying* by watching arrows or looking into entrails.

[3] Conder, *op. cit.*

[4] See pp. 575 ff.

[5] Num. xxxi.

two accounts. In one[1] the cities of the Reubenites cluster about Heshbon, while Gad's cities are both south on the Arnon and north of all Reuben's. In the other,[2] which belongs to a different document, Reuben has all to the south of Heshbon, Gad all to the north, the Wady Hesban probably being the boundary. Neither of these accounts is early, and the former probably represents the distribution of the two tribes at a period when Reuben was dwindling.[3] All we know is that both tribes must have had constant warfare with Moab, who would not be kept south of the Arnon, and that, in course of that warfare, Reuben disappeared from among the tribes of Israel. The Moabite inscription of the middle of the ninth century mentions the men of Gad, and places them immediately to the north of Arnon, but does not know of the men of Reuben.[4] Towards the beginning of the ninth century Moab was as far north as Medeba,[5] but Omri drove him back across the Arnon, and he was tributary to Israel all Omri's days and all Ahab's.[6] Then he revolted, and

Mesha and 'The Moabite Stone.'

[1] Num. xxxii. 34 ff. (E). Gad had Daibon, Ataroth (modern Attarus), Aroer, Ateroth-Sophan unknown, Jezer and Jogbeha in the north, near Jabbok, Beth-Nimra unknown, and Beth-Haran, see p. 488. Reuben had Heshbon, Elealeh, now El-Al, to the north of Heshbon, Kiriathaim, now Kureiyat, south of Wady Zerka Ma'in, Nebo, Baal-Me'on, and the unknown Shibmah.

[2] Josh. xiii. 15 ff. (P?).

[3] Cf. Stade, *Gesch.* 148. But Stade is surely wrong when he maintains that, at the time of the crossing of the Jordan, Reuben had no territory about Heshbon, and that he only came there later. There is no trace of this, and Stade himself owns not to be able to discover where Reuben's seat could be before it was Hesbon.

[4] l. 10: 'men of Gad had dwelt in the land of Ataroth from of old.'

[5] Or Mĕhēdeba, Moabite Stone, ll. 7 and 8.

[6] 2 Kings i. 1; iii. 5. Mesha puts his revolt in the middle of Ahab's reign, l. 8. We might correct the Bible narrative by this contemporary document; but the death of a king was the usual moment chosen for a revolt such as Mesha's.

sweeping north, took and rebuilt, he tells us, all the towns we already know between the Arnon and Nebo.[1] It is interesting that he does not profess to have taken Heshbon. The kings of Judah, Israel and Edom contrived to defeat Moab,[2] but without result. Mesha or his successors must have pushed their conquests farther north, for in the time of the great prophets we find Moab, except for a short interval, in possession of all their ancient territory even north of the Wady Hesban.[3] From the Moabites the land passed to Arabs and Nabateans.[4]

The Hasmoneans in Moab.

It was the Hasmoneans who won back for Israel these ancient seats of Reuben. That curious personage, the Jewish priest Hyrcanus, who was driven by his brothers across Jordan, had built the wonderful castle and caves of Tyrus, now 'Arak el Emir, and established a kind of kingdom. But he killed himself in 176 B.C.[5] John Hyrcanus took Medeba,[6] and Alexander Janneus made the Moabites tributary.[7] He

[1] Aroer, Daibon, Jahaz, Kiriathaim, Beth-Bamoth, Baal-Me'on, Mĕhēdeba, Beth-Diblathên, and he destroyed 'Ataroth and Nebo.

[2] 2 Kings iii.

[3] Amos (vi. 14) sets the boundary of the kingdom of Jeroboam II. at the brook of the 'Arabah. If this, as is generally supposed, means some water-course at the south end of the Dead Sea, Jeroboam II. had again reduced Moab, which is very probable. Isaiah xv. xvi. speaks of Hesbon, Elealeh, and Jazer as Moabite. In Jer. xlviii. 45 Hesbon seems to stand outside Moab. In Ezek. xxv. 9, Medeba is Moab's.

[4] I Macc. ix. 35 ff.: *τοὺς Ναυαταίους*, the *υἱοὶ 'Ιαμβρὶ ἐκ Μηδαβά* in this passage may be compared with the name Ia'meru יעמרו in the Nabatean inscription from Umm-er-Resas, *C.I.S.* ii. 195, and with the *'Αμαραίου παῖδες* of Josephus xiii. *Antt.* i. 2; Clermont Ganneau, *Journal Asiatique*, 1891, p. 542.

[5] Josephus xii. *Antt.* iv. 11. The best accounts of 'Arak el Emir are Merrill's *East of Jordan*, 106 ff.; Tristram, *Land of Israel*, 520; and Conder, *Heth and Moab*, 168 ff.

[6] xiii. *Antt.* ix. 1. About 127 B.C.

[7] *Ibid.* xiii. 5. Before 90 B.C.

built as the Jewish bulwark to the south the great fortress of Mekawar,[1] in Greek Machaerus, to-day Mkawr. It was given up to the Romans, and destroyed by Gabinius, but Herod rebuilt it, making another Masada.[2] Pliny calls Machaerus the second citadel of Judæa.[3] It lay on the border of Peræa, or the tetrarchy of Herod Antipas; to the south of it were the domains of Aretas, Herod's father-in-law, king of the Nabateans.[4] When, for the sake of Herodias, Herod intrigued to divorce the daughter of Aretas, she begged to be sent to Machaerus, and Herod having let her go, she easily escaped from it to one of her father's camps on the Arnon.[5] It is interesting that we have two inscriptions from about this date of the *strategi* or commanders of these camps.[6] Aretas, like Herod, was a vassal of Rome, but instead of appealing to his suzerain to right the wrong done to his

Machaerus and the Herods.

[1] מכור or מכוור. Some readings in the Talmud and Targums insert a *v* or *b* (Lightfoot, *Opera*, Ed. Leusden ii. 582; Levy, *Neuhebräisches Wörterbuch*, *sub voce* מכוור). Josephus gives Μαχαιροῦς; Pliny, Machaerus. For its building by Alexander Janneus see Josephus, vii. *Wars*, vi. 2.

[2] Josephus, xiv. *Antt.* v. 2; vi. 1; vii. *Wars*, vi. 2; i. *Wars*, vii. 2.

[3] *H.N.* v. 16.

[4] Josephus, xviii. *Antt.* v. 1.

[5] *Ibid.* Josephus cannot possibly have meant to say what some words of this passage, as they now stand, imply, viz., that Machaerus belonged at this time to Aretas. Hitherto there had been no reason either of peace or war for Herod's surrender of this fortress; the rest of this passage implies that Herod let his wife go to a fortress still his own, and it is only *after* she reaches Machaerus that Josephus talks of her coming 'into Arabia,' and under the charge of her father's generals. The clause, therefore, assigning Machaerus to Aretas must be corrupt. See next note as to the frontier.

[6] One inscription at Umm-er-Resas, the other at Medeba. *Corpus Inscrip. Semit.*, Pars ii. tom. ii. Nos. 195, 196. The former is 39 A.D., the latter 37. The latter does not prove the possession of Medeba in that year by the Nabateans, for it is not *in situ*, and it may have been brought from a distance. In any case, the position of the Jews and Nabateans in Moab in 37, tells us nothing upon the question of the previous note, as to their frontier a few years before, when Aretas' daughter fled from Herod.

daughter, he prepared himself to go to war against Herod. Herod moved south to Machaerus to meet him, bringing his new wife, Herodias, and her daughter Salome. Aretas lingered, and in the respite Herod turned to deal with another foe, whom his scandalous conduct had aroused within his own domains.[1] John the Baptist, preaching in Peræa, had denounced the marriage of Herodias, and Herod arrested him, and cast him into the dungeons, which Machaerus held beneath its royal palace. Here the revelry of the king's birthday took place, and in the same moments, within the same walls, the murder of the prophet.[2] Machaerus overlooks the Dead Sea—it was another of those awful tragedies, for which nature has furnished here so sympathetic a theatre.[3] But it was not the last of them. Like Masada Machaerus formed one of the refuges of the Jewish zealots, who escaped from the overthrow of Jerusalem. Though unable to take it by storm, the Romans compelled its surrender through sheer menace, slaughtered a large part of the garrison and razed the walls.[4]

The murder of John the Baptist.

We cannot pass on without noticing that Moses and John, the first and the last of the prophets, thirteen

[1] Matt. xiv. 3 ff.

[2] Josephus (xviii. *Antt.* v. 2) is our only authority for the imprisonment and murder of the Baptist in Machaerus. Matthew (xiv. 3 ff.) and Mark (vi. 17 ff.) mention no place. Keim's observation (*Jesus of Nazara*, iv. 217) that Mark vi. 21 implies Tiberias is utterly gratuitous, and an answer, if needed, is supplied by himself (*Ib.* 218, note 1), when he points out that Galilee, as in Mark's account, is often used by Josephus of the whole tetrarchy of Antipas. Wieseler's theory, that the banquet took place in Livias, the execution in Machaerus, is impossible.

[3] See p. 499.

[4] Josephus, vii. *Wars*, vi. 2 f. On the present condition of the site see Burckhardt, Tristram, Conder, and other travellers.

centuries between them, closed their lives almost on the same spot. Within sight also is the scene of the translation of Elijah.

The only other sites in this neighbourhood famed in those times were Heshbon, then Essebon, which gave its name to the district of Sebonitis,[1] and Callirrhoe, probably the hot springs of the Wady Zerka Ma'in.[2]

[1] Josephus, ii. *Wars*, xviii. 1, Σεβωνῖτις; xii. *Antt.* iv. 11, 'Εσσεβωνῖτις; xv. *Antt.* viii. 5, 'Εσεβωνῖτις. The LXX. spell the name of the town 'Εσεβών, 'Εσβοῦς, which latter is also given by Eusebius and Jerome in the *Onomasticon.* In the Christian era it was the seat of a Bishop. The ruins in Wady Hesbân bear the marks of Crusaders.

[2] We have seen (560-561) that the Nahali-el of Num. xxi. is probably the W. Zerka Ma'in. Jos. xvii. *Ant.* vi. 5, i. *Wars* xxxiii. 5, Plin. *N.H.* v. 16, 72, describe the wells of Kallirhoe as flowing into the Dead Sea, though they actually flow into the W. Zerka Ma'in; but the statement bears out the idea that the whole valley was anciently identified with the wells, and supports Conder's identification of it with Nahali-el. In vii. *Wars* vi. 3, Josephus describes the valley as that to the north of Machaerus, and says that in part of it called Baaras there are wells hot and cold, fresh, salt, and sulphur. Jerome gives the name as Baaru (*Onom.*) and, under Kiriathaim, which is said to be near, as ὁ βαρη; while both Eusebius and Jerome speak of the mount of the hot wells. According to Jerome (*Quaest. in lib. Geneseos*, ed. Lag. 17 f.) Kallirhoe was the Lesha' of Gen. x. 19 (cf. Buhl, p. 123). Dechent suggests, *Z.D.P.V.* vii. 196 ff., that Kallirhoe was the group of hot and cold wells known as Eṣ-Ṣara, to the south of the W. Zerka Ma'in.



CHAPTER XXVII

ISRAEL IN GILEAD AND BASHAN



For this Chapter consult Maps I., III. and V.

ISRAEL IN GILEAD AND BASHAN

WE now proceed to what, through so many centuries, was Israel's only proper territory east of Jordan —the Land of Gilead. Gilead, let us remember, extends from the edge of the plateau of Moab to the Yarmuk, and is cut into halves by the Jabbok. Israel's defeat of Sihon had given them the southern half, and brought them to this river. But the Sacred Narrative carries Israel in the days of Moses across the northern half of Gilead and up to Bashan. To the story of Sihon it adds the story of Og.

Og, king of Bashan.

We are not offered the same evidence in this case as in the previous. No song has been preserved that illustrates the war against Og, and the story is confined to the Deuteronomic documents. Accordingly, even critics, who believe in the reality of Sihon and of his overthrow by Israel, have doubted whether Og ever existed or Israel made so early an advance so far north as Bashan.

I have given elsewhere[1] detailed answers to these doubts, and here need only emphasise the geographical probability of Israel's advance towards Bashan before they crossed the Jordan. Israel, it seems certain, were settled for some time in Moab, the country to the north was attractive, no

[1] Appendix, on the Wars against Sihon and Og.

obstacle like Jordan shut it off, and, besides, a chief, such as Og is represented to be, was not likely to be quiescent before so strong an invader on his own side of the river No other invader of Syria from the south-east has crossed Jordan without conquering Eastern Palestine, sometimes even as far as Damascus.[1] Og is represented as governing the country to the Jabbok. But there is no record of Israel's advance from the Jabbok to the Yarmuk. Og met them at Edrei, east of the source of the latter river. Edrei, the present 'Adhra'a,[2] is a very strong position, on the south of the gorge that forms the southern boundary of the plain of Hauran. The gorge winds, and with a tributary ravine isolates the present city on all but the southern side, by which it can be approached on the level. But the citadel is completely cut off, upon a hill which stands forward on the gorge, and probably with the caves below it held the whole ancient town. These caves are one of the wonders of Eastern Palestine. They form a great subterranean city, a labyrinth of streets with shops and houses on either side, and a market-place.[3] How old the whole is we cannot say. The Bible makes no mention of so great a marvel, which is, therefore, probably to be dated from later times. Bashan was full of cities[4] besides Edrei, as

Undergronnd Edrei.

[1] One thinks especially of how the Nabateans pushed their conquest up to Damascus, even in face of Greek powers, and how the Mohammedans took Damascus before they took Jerusalem.

[2] אדרעי, Modern Arabic orthography is Dara'ât, but the Bedouin preserve the most ancient pronounciation 'Azra'ât. The Greeks spelt it 'Αδραα.

[3] Wetzstein, *Reisebericht*, 47 f. Porter, *Five Years in Damascus*. From the entrance in the gorge, we penetrated for fifty yards, and were stopped by a great and recent fall of the rock. Our guides told us the passage had been blown up by the Kaimakam to prevent the labyrinth being used by fugitives from military service and justice.

[4] Deut. iii.

it is to-day, but almost none of the present ruins go back beyond the Christian era.

Half-tribe of Manasseh.

Less clear than Israel's conquest of Og is their occupation of his land, for the accounts of it differ, and many hold that the interpretation of them is, that Manasseh's settlement in Half Gilead (north of the Jabbok) and in Bashan took place not before Israel's passage of the Jordan, but from Western Palestine, and after the settlement of the tribe to the north of Ephraim. There are, however, reasons against this, and in favour of the earlier settlement: so that, on our present evidence, the matter must remain uncertain.[1] But at whatever period Hebrew tribes first settled in Gilead, Gilead thereafter continued to be the peculiar domain of Israel on the east of Jordan. The reasons for this, with all the consequent movements of history in Gilead, are as clear as the questions of her various localities and sites are obscure. Gilead is still only a half-explored country.

Gilead, Israel's proper territory.

[1] Num. xxxii. 1, JE states that only Reuben and Gad asked Moses for land east of Jordan. It is other sources which add to their settlement there the settlement of the half-tribe of Manasseh (Deut. and Num. xxxii. 33, assigned by most to the redactor). Deborah's song seems to speak of Machir as a western clan (Judges v. 14). The story of how Machir, son of Manasseh, took Gilead, and Jair, the son of Manasseh, took its camp-villages and called them Havoth-Jair, is attached by an earlier document (J) to the story of the settlement of Eastern Palestine under Moses (Num. xxxii. 39 ff.). But Judges x. assigns Havoth-Jair to Jair a Gileadite in the days of the Judges (*see* p. 551). Wellhausen says (*Hist.* 2nd ed. p. 33) that this makes 'probable' the invasion of Gilead by Manasseh after the conquest of Western Palestine. Stade (*Gesch.* 163) thinks it happened when Reuben and Gad, whom he supposes to have first settled in Gilead, pushed south to Moab. But, as we have seen, p. 275, Reuben and Gad were in Moab from the first, and Stade gives no date, proof, or trace of proof, for the movement he imputes to them. Budde (*Richt u. Sam.* pp. 32 ff.), by an able and ingenious argument, points out that the children of Joseph could not (Josh. xvii. 14-18) have complained to Joshua that they had only one lot, if besides their western territory they had already from Moses a territory east of Jordan, and he proposes by inserting 'Gilead' in ver. 18, to

Why Gilead constituted the eastern domain of Israel may be understood from her formation. Gilead is the only part of Eastern Palestine which corresponds to the territories of Israel in the West. Gilead is mountain or hill-country between the two great plateaus of Moab and Hauran. Hauran was swept by the Arameans or Syrians, a people with chariots ; north of the Yarmuk Israel seldom got footing. Moab south, and the level country east of Gilead, were swept by the Arabs and Ammonites. But neither Aram from the north, nor Ammon from the south, though they sometimes carried fire and sword across Gilead, was able to drive the Hebrews from those high-wooded ridges between Moab and the Yarmuk, which formed almost as integral a portion of Israel as the hill-country of Judah, or the hill-country of Ephraim. Gilead was also, we must remember, in close communication with Western Palestine, as neither Bashan nor Moab could ever be.

Reasons for this.

Accordingly, we find in Gilead, from the earliest times to the Assyrian captivity, Hebrew communities, centres and rallying-places for Hebrew dynasties, Hebrew character and heroism, with prophecy, the distinctive glory of Hebrew

make this the new lot which Joshua granted them. But there is no evidence in the passage of 'Gilead' having fallen out of the text, or of its being meant by Joshua. Nor could it have helped the House of Joseph against the Canaanites of Western Palestine (ver. 18) to have occupied Gilead. And, as Stade observes (*Gesch.* 163), it is not clear that Joshua did grant them a second lot. The arguments to prove the invasion of Northern Gilead from Western Palestine, are, therefore, inconclusive. Note, on the other side, that Gilead is said to be father of Abiezer and Shechem (Num. xxvi. 29 f. P ; Josh. xvii. 2, JE), and therefore older in Manasseh's history than these western towns of the tribe, and that while Judges xii. 4 (a narrative probably from the period of the early Kings) speaks of some Gileadites as late immigrants into their territory, it assumes that Manasseh had previously occupied this.

life. Deborah's song actually substitutes Gilead for Gad as the name of a tribe in Israel.[1] In his pursuit of the Midianites Gideon finds in Gilead two communities, Succoth and Penuel, from which he expects the same devotion to Israel as he would from any towns in Ephraim.[2] Two of the judges are Gileadite. One of them, Jair, lives on the very east of the province, on the border of the desert, where men inhabit not cities but camps.[3] The other is the imposing figure of Jephthah, Israel's champion against the Ammonites, who occupied the fertile land on the waters of the Upper Jabbok. The story of Jephthah throbs with the sense of common interest between Gilead and Ephraim.[4] Mizpeh in Gilead was the gathering-place of all Israel against Benjamin.[5] Again, when the Ammonites threatened the helpless Jabesh-Gilead, Saul proved his title as king of All-Israel by succouring this Eastern city,[6] a service which its citizens remembered when they rescued his body from insult at Bethshan, and gave it burial with themselves.[7] It was certainly with some thought of all this that Abner vainly tried, in Gilead, to restore Saul's dynasty.[8]

Gilead and the early history of Israel.

By his conquests over Ammon and Aram of Damascus and Sobah, David was the first to bring all Eastern Palestine under Israel's suzerainty.[9] So completely had David won the hearts of Eastern Israel that when Absalom's rebellion broke out he sought a refuge in Gilead, and made his head-

Eastern Palestine under David and Solomon.

[1] Judges v. 17. [2] Judges viii.

[3] Judges x. 3-5. See p. 575. Nobah went still farther east to Kanatha in the Jebel Hauran, Num. xxxii. 42.

[4] Judges x. ff. [5] *Id.* xx. 1. [6] 1 Sam. xi.

[7] 1 Sam. xxxi. 11-13. [8] 2 Sam. ii.

[9] 2 Sam. viii. and x. The exact degree of the subjection of Aram to David is left in doubt. Sobah lay to the north of Damascus.

quarters Mahanaim, where Abner had crowned Ish-bosheth. The great woods of Gilead live before us in the story of the subsequent battle, when the rough *woodland multiplied to devour more people than the sword*, and Absalom was hanged by his long hair in the oak.[1] Solomon did not retain all the Eastern conquests of his father, and in his day Damascus grew to that power which made her, for the next three centuries, so formidable a foe to Israel.[2] After the disruption Gilead remained with the northern kingdom, opposite which it lay, and with which it had easy communication by the fords of Jordan.[3] Jeroboam fortified Penuel, and, for a time, may have made it his capital.[4] Soon afterwards Gilead gave to Israel a great personality. *Elijah the Tishbite* breaks across Jordan from *Tishbeh in Gilead*[5] with the same suddenness as in the end he disappears across the same river. In Gilead we must also seek for the Brook Cherith, the scene of his retreat.[6] During the reign of Ahab, Damascus and Israel fought as allies against Assyria,[7] but from this event onward they were foes. They met on Israelite territory and Aram was beaten, met again at Aphek, on Aramean territory above the Lake of Galilee, where the great road still comes along from Damascus to the

Elijah the Tishbite.

Aram and Samaria.

[1] 2 Sam. xviii. 8, 10. On the name Ephraim (ver. 6) on that side Jordan see p. 335.

[2] The idea that Solomon built Tadmor or Palmyra must be abandoned. For Tadmor in 1 Kings ix. 18 read Tamar, a town in Judah. See p. 270.

[3] On the connection of Ephraim with Eastern Palestine see p. 335.

[4] So it seems from the close connection between his abandonment of Shechem and building of Penuel, 1 Kings xii. 25.

[5] 1 Kings xvii. 1; LXX.

[6] It is described as *before*, *i.e.* to the east of, *Jordan*, 1 Kings xvii. 3, 5.

[7] At Karkar in 854 B.C.

Jordan,[1] and Aram was beaten once more. Later, the Arameans took Ramoth in Gilead, and Ahab fell in the effort to regain it.[2] After some years, in which the Arameans kept up war against Western Palestine,[3] and besieged Samaria,[4] Joram, grandson of Ahab, won back Ramoth-Gilead, but it was still contested by Aram,[5] and Jehu was serving in the garrison when he was anointed to destroy the House of Omri. In Jehu's reign, and perhaps because of the internal troubles consequent on his usurpation of the throne, Hazael of Damascus, sweeping to the Arnon, was able to conquer all Israel's possessions east of Jordan.[6] It is probably to the barbarities of this campaign, in which Aram was joined by Ammon and Moab, that Amos refers: *For three transgressions of Damascus, and for four, I will not turn it away; for they have threshed Gilead with threshing-sledges of iron. For three transgressions of the children of Ammon, and for four, I will not turn it away; for they have ripped up the mothers of Gilead—to enlarge their border!*[7] Bands of Moabites *used to invade* Western Palestine *at the coming in of the year*, and Hazael and Ben-Hadad, kings of Syria, *oppressed Israel all their days.*[8]

During these evil times the prophet Elisha, genuine borderman as he was (from Abel-meholah on Jordan),[9]

[1] The present Fîk. Wellhausen and Robertson Smith are surely wrong in identifying this Aphek with that where the Philistines mustered. See pp. 204, 401. The narrative of the war between Israel and Aram, 1 Kings xx.

[2] 1 Kings xxii.

[3] 2 Kings v. 2; vi. 8.

[4] *Id.* vi. 24 ff.; vii.

[5] *Id.* ix. 1, 4, 14.

[6] *Id.* x. 32.

[7] Amos i. 3, 13.

[8] 2 Kings xiii. 2.

[9] 1 Kings xix. 16, somewhere in Jordan, probably south of the great plain of Bethshan, Judges vii. 22; 1 Kings iv. 12. Eusebius and Jerome, in the *Onomasticon*, 'Αβελμαελαί, place it in the Ghôr, ten miles south of Bethshan, at a spot called, in their day, *Βηθμαιελά*. Conder suggests 'Ain Helweh, nine and a half miles south of Beth-shan.

expert in camp-life, ambush and scouting,[1] inspired with political foresight,[2] had also been the moral stay and inspiration of his broken people—altogether,[3] through those three long distracting reigns, *the very chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof.*[4] His bequest to Israel was hope: dying, he prophesied that the young Joash should thrice smite the Syrians at Aphek.[5] And so it came to pass. Joash recovered from Aram what Jehoahaz had lost,[6] and under the next, the long glorious reign of Jeroboam II., Israel enjoyed supremacy up to her ideal borders, Hamath and the Dead Sea, and probably occupied part of the very territory of Damascus.[7] This lasted for fifty years. The prophet Hosea treats Gilead as if it were as integral a part of the kingdom as Ephraim.[8]

Elisha.

The captivity of Gilead.

But then came the flood which was to devastate with equal thoroughness both Western and Eastern Palestine. In 734 *Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, came and took Ijon and Abel-beth-maacah, and Janoah, and Kedesh, and Hazor, and Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and carried them captive to Assyria.*[9] The eastern territories of Israel were left to the Ishmaelites. Isaiah does not once mention Gilead. Micah has only a prayer that God's flock may *pasture again in Bashan and Gilead, as in days of old.*[10]

Gilead in the Prophets.

[1] These practical qualities of Elisha, so different from those of Elijah, are obvious, from all the marvellous narratives of 2 Kings iv. 38 ff.; vi. 1-23; especially 12; *Elisha, the prophet that is in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the words thou speakest in thy bedchamber.*

[2] 2 Kings viii. 7 ff.; ix. 3.

[3] *Id.* vi. 13-17.

[4] *Id.* xiii. 14.

[5] *Id.* xiii. 17.

[6] *Id.* xiii. 25.

[7] *Id.* xiv. 28, not necessarily Damascus itself.

[8] Hosea vi. 8; xii. 11. Cf. Obad. 19.

[9] 2 Kings xv. 29.

[10] Micah vii. 14.

To Jeremiah, Gilead is only a figure and a proverb, whose pathos is deepened by her abandonment by Israel; *Is there no balm in Gilead, no physician there?*[1] But, in the days of the great captivity, Zechariah names Gilead as a promise: *I will bring them again out of the land of Egypt, and gather them out of Assyria; and I will bring them down into the land of Gilead and Lebanon.*[2] The returned people shall be so many that Gilead shall be needed, and even Lebanon, for the overflow of them.

Uncertainty of sites in Gilead.

Such, then, is the history of Gilead, a history of constant war, all the tangled lines of which become intelligible when you recognise the position of this territory—high forest ridges between the river Jordan and the desert, between the two great plateaus of Moab and Hauran. But when you come to details, and seek to fasten names, and trace the scenery of separate events, you are baffled. In all Syria sites are nowhere less fixed than in Gilead. There is only one identification which is certain; there are, perhaps, two more which are probable.

The Jabbok.

The certainty is the Jabbok or Yabbok. One has seen this Jabbok from one's childhood,—the midnight passage of a ford, the brief section of a river gleaming under torches, splashed and ploughed by struggling animals, cries of women and children above the noise; and then, left alone, with the night, the man and the river,—for the narrative betokens some sympathy

[1] Jer. viii. 22. [2] Zech. x. 10.

between the two tortuous courses:[1] the wrestle with God beside the struggling stream, and the dawn breaking down the valley on a changed life. Now, to-day there is no river in Syria which you associate more with the height of noon: groups of cattle standing to the knee in water, brakes of oleanders soaked in sunshine, and a fair array of fields on either side, scattered over with reapers and men guiding water by ancient channels to orchards and gardens. From first to last, the valley of the Jabbok is of great fertility. The head-waters of the river rise on the edge of Moab, only some eighteen miles from the Jordan, yet to the east of the water-parting. So the river flows at first desertwards, under the name of Ammân, past Rabbath-Ammon[2] to the great Hajj road. There it turns north, fetches a wide compass north-west, cuts in two the range of Gilead, and by a very winding bed flows west-south-west to the Jordan. The whole course, not counting the windings, is over sixty miles. The water is shallow, always fordable, except where it breaks between steep rocks, mostly brawling over a stony bed, muddy, and, at a distance, of a grey-blue colour, which brings it its present name of the Zerka. The best fields are upon the upper reaches, where much wheat is grown, but almost nowhere on the banks are you out of sight of sheep, or cattle, or tillage. A great road from Jordan follows the valley all the way to the desert, another runs from the desert by Ammân to the west.[3] The river has always been a frontier and a line of traffic. Some day the valley will

[1] יַבֹּק Yabboḳ, and יֵאָבֵק, Ye‘abheḳ = *he wrestles*. The narrative connects the wrestling both with the river and with the place called Penuel.

[2] See the next chapter, on the Decapolis.

[3] Merrill, *East of the Jordan*, ch. xxx.: ‘Exploration of the Jabbok.’

be very populous and busy. Yet the highest fame of Jabbok will ever be its first fame, and not all the sunshine, ripening harvests along its live length, can be so bright as that first gleaming and splashing of its waters at midnight, or the grey dawn breaking on Israel next morning. The history of Gilead is a history of material war and struggle, civilisation enduring only by perpetual strife. But upon the Jabbok its first hero was taught how man has to reckon in life with God also, and that his noblest struggles are in the darkness, with the Unseen.

Succoth and Jogbehah.

The two sites in Gilead, whose identification is probable, are both named in Gideon's pursuit of the Midianites. Succoth may be the present Tell Deir 'Alla, a high mound in the Jordan Valley, about one mile north of the Jabbok.[1] Jogbehah is surely echoed in the present Jubeihah, Gubeihah, or 'Ajbêhât, on the road from Salt to Ammân.[2] *Gideon went up by the way of them that dwell in tents on the east of Nobah*, unknown, *and Jogbehah.* This may mean the road up the Jabbok itself.

Penuel.

In any case, Gideon, going east, came from Succoth to Penuel, as Jacob, going west, came from Penuel to Succoth. Penuel was probably a prominent ridge near the Jabbok, not necessarily to the south of

[1] The identification is due to Merrill (*East of the Jordan*, pp. 385-388, concurred in by Conder, *Heth and Moab*, p. 183), and has been won through the statement of the Talmud (Shebiith ix. 2, Gemara) that the later name of Succoth was דרעלה, Dar'ala. Of course this leaves the matter only probable. Psalm lx. 6 mentions the Vale of Succoth, between Shechem and Gilead.

[2] Judges viii. 11, cf. Num. xxxii. 35, 42. This seems to have been Van de Velde's suggestion. We visited the numerous ruins in 1891; our search revealed nothing but some Greek carvings. The name 'Ajbêhât, or 'Agbêhât, is in my diary as given me by some Arabs we met there. Jubeihat is on the *P.E.F. Map*.

this, and above Succoth.[1] We are equally ignorant of Mahanaim. It lay presumably to the north of Jabbok, and of the great gorge of Jordan, on the border of Gad, and not far from Jordan ; and it was an important city, fit for a capital.[2] The other famous names cannot be accurately fixed—Mizpeh, Ramath-Mizpeh, Ramoth-Gilead, and the Land of Tob. Mizpeh, the scene of Laban's covenant with Jacob, has been placed by Conder at Sûf, a place of dolmens and stone-circles between 'Ajlun and Jerash.[3] This may be, but in the diversity of other accounts of a Mizpeh in Gilead, one of which, Jephthah's story, places it on the border of Ammon,[4] another implies that it lay more to the west,[5] another puts Ramath-

Mahanaim.

Ramath-Mizpeh and Ramoth-Gilead.

[1] That Penuel was prominent is likely, from the analogy of the Phœnician headland known as θεοῦ πρόσωπον (Strabo xvi. 2, 15 f.). Gen. xxxii. 25-33, implies that it was near Jabbok ; Judges viii. 8-11, that it was above Succoth. If Jacob came from the north, then Penuel was south of Jabbok ; if from the east, then Penuel may have been on either bank, for the eastern road down the Jabbok valley crosses the river more than once. Merrill suggests the Tulul edh-Dhahab, round and between which the Jabbok forces its way into the Jordan (pp. 390-392). Conder puts Penuel on the ridge of the Jebel 'Osha.

[2] Gen. xxxii. 1-10 (vv. 4-14*a* of this chapter belong to J, vv. 1-3, 14*b* ff. to E) seems to put Mahanaim near Jordan, which would make Jacob's approach to Jabbok take place from the north (see previous note). Abner, after crossing Jordan, came through the Bithron or Gorge (2 Sam. ii. 29), a name which suits the narrow central portion of the Jordan Valley, to Mahanaim. The Kikkar, across which Ahimaaz ran to Mahanaim (*id.* xviii. 23) is probably the Kikkar of Jordan (see pp. 335, 505). Conder (*Heth and Moab*, 185 ff.) places Mahanaim near the Ḅuḳei'a, to the east of Salt, a region not likely to contain so important a town, and hardly on the border of Gad, where Mahanaim is placed by Josh. xiii. 26. Merrill (p. 437) suggests Khurbet Suleikhat, 300 feet above the Ghôr, in the Wady 'Ajlun ; cf. Kasteren (*Z.D.P.V.* xiii. 205), on Kh.-Mahne. Visited by Seetzen, *Reise*, i. 385.

[3] Gen. xxxi. 49. Conder, *Heth and Moab*, 181 f. ; Oliphant, *Land of Gilead*, 209-216.

[4] Judges x. 17 ; xi. 11, 29, 34.

[5] Or it could hardly have been the gathering-place of all Israel, against Benjamin, Judges xx. xxi.

Mizpeh on the northern border of Gad,[1] while another speaks of a Maspha or Mizpeh in the far north-east[2]—what certainty can we have that these are the same? or, if they are the same, what one site will suit them all? Ramoth-Gilead, which has been assigned to at least five different places, probably lay north of them all, near the Yarmuk, for it was on debatable ground between Aram and Israel.[3] The name of Land of Tob,[4] which was north of Mizpeh, may survive in that of the Wady and village of Taiyibeh, east of Pella.[5]

The Land of Tob.

But while these ancient sites are uncertain, it ought to be remembered that no province has at the present day sites which, by nature and the part they have played in modern history, are more definitely stamped as likely to have been among the famous sites of old. It is impossible for us to believe that Es-Salt with its Jebel 'Osha, 'Ajlun with its equally famous view-point and fortress in the Kula'at-er-Rubaad, Pella, Gadara, Irbid, Remtheh, were not famous in the history of Israel in Gilead. Surely they were not unused. It may only be the meagreness of geographical details in the Old Testament which prevents us from identifying Mizpeh with the far-seeing Kula'at-er-Rubaad, Mahanaim with so worthy a capital for Gilead as 'Ajlun, or with so historical a site as Pella; or from placing Ramoth-Gilead at Reimûn,[6] or

Later historical sites.

[1] Josh. xiii. 26. [2] Taken by Judas Maccabeus, 1 Macc. v. 35.

[3] 1 Kings xxii., 2 Kings ix.

[4] And not, as Conder says, the district in which Mizpeh lay, for Jephthah was summoned from it to come to Mizpeh, which the narrative places near the territory of Ammon.

[5] The *n* as given in the Syriac version of 1 Macc. v. 13, and in the Greek of 2 Macc. x. 11, 17, is not a radical, but the Greek termination, Τώβιον or Τούβιον, Τουβιηνοι. Hence the *P.E.F. Red. Map*, 1890, is wrong n suggesting Tibneh to the south of Taiyibeh.

[6] As Conder does.

at Es-Salt, or at the Kula'at-er-Rubaad, though, as already said, it seems necessary, from what the Old Testament tells us of the frequency with which Ramoth-Gilead was contested by Aram and Israel, to put it farther north, near the Yarmuk. Irbid and Ramtheh, on the north-east, are both of them fairly strong sites ; the former is to-day the capital of the district of 'Ajlun, the latter a station on the Hajj road, that immemorial line of traffic. Both of them must have been prominent places in ancient times.

But all that can be done to-day is to state the topographical problems of Israel in Gilead, and leave their solution till the discovery of fresh evidence.

The Maccabees and Eastern Palestine.

After the return from exile the Jews spread themselves across Eastern Palestine, and came into conflict, as we have seen them do in the Shephelah, with the new race of Greek settlers who flowed in in the wake of Alexander the Great. Hellenism came to terms with the native paganism : the two were amalgamated. But the Jews kept to themselves, they were few and weak, and when the great religious war broke out in the second century they were sorely pressed in their various cities.[1] Judas Maccabeus, who had previously conquered the Ammonites under a Greek leader,[2] achieved a second victorious campaign,[3] the course of which is hard to trace, but it brought him as far east as Boṣra. He took that town, and next a place, Dathema, or, according to another reading, Rametha, in which it is

[1] 1 Macc. v. 9.

[2] 1 Macc. v. 6-8.

[3] 1 Macc. v. 24 ff. ; the wilderness into which he went three days' journey must be that to the east of Ammon and Gilead, whence he suddenly turned on Boṣra.

possible to trace an echo of Ramoth of Gilead,[1] and next, Maspha,[2] Casphon,[3] Maged, Bosor,[4] and other cities of the country of Galaad. The heathen gathered a force at Raphon,[5] probably Raphana of the Decapolis on the Yarmuk, but Judas defeated them and took Karnain,[6] with its great temple to Atargatis. Then, gathering all the Jews who would come back with him, he returned by 'a great and well-fortified' city called Ephron,[7] which he was forced to take before he could pass, and crossed the Jordan at Beth-shan.

Alexander Janneus in Eastern Palestine.

It was Alexander Janneus[8] who again brought Gilead within the territories of Israel. First he took Gadara, but seems to have been repulsed from Amathus, a very strong fortress just north of the Jabbok, now Amatha.[9] On a second campaign, after overcoming 'the Moabites and Gileadites,' he destroyed Amathus and its Greek defenders, but was defeated on the Yarmuk by Obodas, the Arabian. 'He was thrown by means of a multitude of camels into a deep valley'—a fate of singular likeness to that which the Arabs inflicted on the Byzantine army in 634 A.D., forcing them by sheer weight of numbers into a defile in the

[1] I Macc. v. 9; Greek, Δαθεμα; Syriac, Rametha. This would confirm the northern position of Ramoth. See above, p. 5 7.

[2] Not necessarily Mizpeh of Gilead. The Syriac reads Alim, Josephus Malle.

[3] Χασφώρ (v. 26), or Χασφών, or Χασφώθ (v. 36).

[4] Μακέδ and Βοσόρ.

[5] V. 37, Ραφών ἐκπέραν τοῦ Χειμάῤῥου. See next chapter.

[6] V. 26, Καρναΐν.

[7] Vv. 46 ff. Ἐφρών; Syriac, Ophrah.

[8] B.C. 104-78.

[9] Josephus (xiii. *Antt.* xiii. 3; i. *Wars*, iv. 2) says that Amathus was taken by Alexander, but mentions his repulse and departure to other fields immediately afterwards. The *Onomasticon* places Amathus twenty-one miles south of Pella.

same neighbourhood.[1] But Alexander, though a dissolute man, was a very determined captain. He returned to Eastern Palestine, and though it cost him a three years' campaign, 84-81, he thoroughly reduced the country. In Gilead he took Pella, Dion and Gerasa ; in Bashan, Golan, Seleucia and Gamala.[2]

Thus all Gilead and Bashan with Moab were again Israel's, and this terrible debauchee repeated the triumphs of a David and a Jeroboam II. Another Semitic power, the Nabatean, held all to the East, and Damascus. The Greek cities were Judaised. Hellenism lay prostrate.

So matters continued till the arrival of Pompey and the Roman Legions in 64 B.C. These closed the dominion of Israel in Bashan and Gilead, and opened a new period in the history of Eastern Palestine, which we shall follow in the next two chapters.

[1] Josephus in xiii. *Antt.* xiii. 4 places the rout of Alexander's army near Gadara, but in i. *Wars*, iv. 4, near Gaulana, *i.e.* Golan. We must not suppose this means that the two were the same place—though Gadara, which is not mentioned in the Old Testament, nor identified with any Old Testament name, is not a wholly impossible site for Golan, standing as it does on the very border of Gaulanitis. More probably Golan lay north of the Yarmuk, and the above passages prove it must have lain near the latter and Gadara. Sahem ej Jaulan (see p. 536) is seventeen miles north-east of Gadara and three miles from the Yarmuk.

[2] Josephus, xiii. *Antt.* xv. 3, 4 ; i. *Wars*, iv. 8. For Pella, Dion, Gerasa see next chapter. Pella was destroyed for the inhabitants would not accept Judaism. On Golan see previous note and p. 550. Seleucia, Σελευκεία (to be distinguished from the great Seleucia on the Tigris, Josephus xiii. *Antt.* vii. 1 ; xviii. *Antt.* ix. 8, and other cities of the same name founded by Seleneus Nicator), lay east of Lake Huleh (iv. *Wars*, i. 1) on an unknown site. Josephus fortified it (ii. *Wars*, xx. 6 ; *Life*, 37), and it was a centre of revolt against the Romans (iv. *Wars*, i. 1). For Gamala, see p. 459.

CHAPTER XXVIII

GREECE OVER JORDAN: THE DECAPOLIS



For this Chapter consult Maps I., III., V. and VI.

GREECE OVER JORDAN: THE DECAPOLIS

GREEK immigration, as we have seen, flowed into Palestine in the wake of Alexander the Great. Numbers of his veterans settled in Northern and Eastern Syria, while the dynasties, founded by his generals at Antioch and in Egypt welcomed the arrival of multitudes more of their countrymen. The settlements of these immigrants assumed the characteristic Greek form of civic communities, democratic in constitution, and always aiming at independence, but often subject to the great powers of the East, or to local tyrants.[1] On the coast the Greeks absorbed the ancient Philistine and Phœnician cities; east of the Jordan they more frequently occupied positions which had not formerly been historical.

Alexander the Great.

The oldest Greek settlements in Eastern Palestine were Pella and Dion, which, as their Macedonian names suggest, were probably founded by Alexander's own soldiers.[2] Nearly as old were Philadelphia, on the site of Rabbath-Ammon, Gadara, and

Earliest Greek cities over Jordan.

[1] See pp. 588-590.

[2] The Macedonian Pella was the birthplace of Alexander, and there was a second Asiatic Pella in Northern Syria. The suggestion of Tuch (*Quæstiones de Fl. Josephi libris historicis*, p. 18) that Pella is Greek for פחלא, equivalent to the modern name Fahil, is not so improbable as Schürer supposes (*Hist.* ii. 1, 114), for it is impossible to understand how Fahil could have risen from Pella. Dion was a town of Macedonia, and Stephanus Byzantinus attributes the Syrian Dion to Alexander himself.

Abila, all of them grown to be important fortresses by 218 B.C.[1] Bosra was a strong Greek centre in the time of the Maccabees.[2] Gerasa and Hippos are not mentioned till later.[3] Of none of these cities have inscriptions or coins been found of a date earlier than the arrival of the Romans.[4]

Greek cities enfranchised by Pompey.

The freedom of the Greek cities of Palestine was taken from them by the Jewish princes; it was Pompey who 'restored them to their citizens,'[5] and they date their civic eras from the year of his Syrian campaign, 64-63 B.C. The exact measure of independence which they enjoyed is uncertain, and must have varied much between the time of Pompey and that of Trajan. They had communal freedom, their own councils,[6] the right of coinage, the right of asylum, the right of property and administration in the surrounding districts, the right of association with each other for defensive and commercial purposes. But from the first they were 'put under the Province of Syria.'[7] That is to say, their administration

Rights of Greek cities under Rome.

[1] Polybius v. 71; xvi. 39; Josephus, xii. *Antt.* iii. 3; Stark, *Gaza*, p. 381.

[2] See p. 588.

[3] Gerasa, when taken by Alexander Janneus. See p. 589. Hippos, when freed by Pompey.

[4] With the doubtful exception of a coin of Dion of 89-88 B.C., De Saulcy, *Numis. de la T. S.* pp. 378 ff. The next earliest seems to be one of Gadara of 56 B.C. *Ibid.* p. 294.

[5] Josephus (xiv. *Antt.* iv. 4; i. *Wars*, vii. 7) mentions Gadara, Hippos, Pella, and Dion, as freed by Pompey, but Abila, Kanata, Kanatha, and Philadelphia also dated their coins from 64-63 B.C., the so-called Pompeian era. The era of Gerasa is uncertain. Only some of the coins of Scythopolis are dated from Pompey. The coins of Gadara and Pella show that these towns assumed the name 'Pompeian' (De Saulcy, *Numis. de la T. S.*, 293, 298, 299).

[6] See p. 606.

[7] Josephus as in note 5.

of politics and law was subject to revision by the Governor, they were taxed for imperial purposes, their coins bore *the image of Cæsar*, they were liable to military service,[1] and while they appear to have had no Roman garrison,[2] Roman generals used them for the quartering of the legions.[3] The position at this time of the Greek cities in Syria must not be compared to that of the Greek cities of Europe. In Europe and in Asia the relations of Greece and Rome were very different. In Europe Rome was the conqueror, and might be regarded as the oppressor, of Greece; in Asia the Roman power was the indispensable ally and safeguard of the Greeks, and their interests could never be opposed. Therefore, even when the authority of the Empire over these cities was vindicated by instances so extreme as the gift by Augustus of some of them to Herod,[4] the inhabitants at first made no resistance, and, indeed, in Herod they found an overlord of great Hellenic sympathy.[5]

The Decapolis.

Confederacies of Greek cities were common under both the Republic and the Empire,[6] and were formed for commerce and the cultivation of the Hellenic spirit against alien races. Their most famous Oriental instance was the Decapolis. The origin of this League is nowhere mentioned, but to those familiar with

[1] Josephus, ii. *Wars*, xviii. 19.

[2] Except at the request of the citizens themselves on such an occasion, as described by Josephus, iv. *Wars*, vii. 3, 4.

[3] As Vespasian wintered the Legions V. and X. in Scythopolis, iii. *Wars*, ix. 1.

[4] On the east of Jordan, Hippos, Gadara; on the west, Gaza, Ashdod, Joppa, Straton's Tower, were given to Herod in 30 B.C.; xv. *Antt.* vii. 3; i. *Wars*, xx. 3.

[5] Gadara alone appears to have had difficulties with Herod, xv. *Antt.* x. 2, 3.

[6] For Greece, cf. Mommsen, *Prov. of the Roman Empire*, Eng. Edition, i. 264, 265.

the history of the period its reason will be obvious. Between 64 B.C., when Pompey constituted the Province of Syria, and 106 A.D., when at last Trajan succeeded in making the Roman government effective up to the desert, Eastern Palestine remained exposed and unsettled. The Romans left the government to their Semitic vassals, Zenodorus, Herod, and the Nabatean princes,[1] but these made little of the work. Bands of Arab robbers scoured Eastern Palestine, and even in 40 A.D. the settlers in Hauran were still driven underground.[2] Now, it is this period of unsettlement, in which the forces, both of order and disorder, were Semitic, which is covered by the history of the Decapolis. We may therefore venture to recognise in the latter a League of Greek cities against the various Semitic influences east and west of Jordan, from which Rome had freed them, but could not yet undertake to give them full protection.[3] As at least two of the cities of the League, Hippos and Gadara, were given by Augustus to Herod, it is possible that the League did not arise till after Herod's death in 4 B.C., when these cities regained their independence ; but it is more probable that it had existed since the enfranchisement of so many of the towns by Pompey, and the necessity which existed even then for Greeks to support each other against the Semites. The religion of the Decapolis, as we shall see, was, in contrast to that of other towns in Eastern Palestine, thoroughly Hellenic.

An Anti-Semitic League.

The Decapolis, according to its name, consisted at first

[1] See especially Josephus, xv. *Antt.* x. i.

[2] An inscription of that year describes the population as living in caves and underground cities, Waddington, 2329.

[3] The name Decapolis does not occur before Pliny, Josephus, and the Gospels of Matthew and Mark.

of ten cities. Look at the sites of these ten, trace the great roads which connect them, and you will recognise the military and commercial policy of their confederation.

The Geography of the Decapolis.

The Plain of Esdraelon gives open passage from the coast to Jordan. At the inland end of this passage the Ten Cities begin, and are scattered fanwise along the main routes of traffic across Jordan to the desert. Scythopolis is the only member of the League west of Jordan, but she was indispensable to her eastern fellows by her command of their communications with the sea and with the Greek cities of the coast.[1] From Scythopolis three roads cross Jordan and traverse Eastern Palestine. All the other original members of the Decapolis lay either on these roads, or on the road they run to join—the great line of commerce between Damascus and Arabia along the border of the desert. Immediately across Jordan and at the beginnings of the three roads lay Pella, Gadara, Hippos. The positions of these are undisputed—Pella on the southern, Gadara on the central, Hippos on the northern or Damascus, road.[2] They stood just above the Jordan Valley; they were not twenty-five miles apart, their territories touched, and thus together they commanded the edge of the Eastern tableland. Across this we now follow the three roads, to which they held the entrance. The road from Pella struck south-east over the hills of Gilead, and may be traced both by the directions of Eusebius and by some monuments, to which we were able to add by the fortunate

Scythopolis.

Gadara, Hippos, and Pella.

[1] On Scythopolis (Bethshan), see pp. 357 ff.

[2] Hippos had coins with horse, Pegasus, woman holding him: De Saulcy.

discovery of a milestone.[1] On this road lay three other members of the Decapolis—Dion, on an undiscovered site[2] near Pella, and Gerasa and Philadelphia, the farthest south. The central road, which

Dion, Gerasa, Philadelphia.

[1] This road, of which Eusebius tells us in the *Onomasticon*, artt. Ἀρισωθ and Ἰαβεῖς Γαλάαδ, was traced by Mr. Merrill past Miryamîn, Kefr Abil, Maklûb, and Wady Mahneh to Ajlun (*East of Jordan*, p. 357 ; cf. Guy Le Strange, *Across the Jordan*, p. 277). In Kefr Abil we confirmed this line by the discovery of a Roman milestone, now used as a pillar in the mosque, the inscription on which stands as on the left hand of these two columns, and may be restored as on the right hand :—

MP	Imperator Cæsar
I..IVS	M(arcus) Aurelius Ant
VSAVG	oninus Augustus
I A	[Parthicus Maximus?]
I II ET	Trib(unicia) Pot(estate)? Co(n)s(ul) II. et
	Imperator Cæsar
! VERVS	L(ucius) Aurelius Verus
IICOSIБ	Trib(unicia) Pot(estate) II. ? Co(n)s(ul) II.
I:ILI	Divi Antonini Filii
POTES	Divi Hadriani Nepotes
PARTHICI	Divi Trajani Parthici Pro-
IVI	-nepotes Divi Nervæ Ab-
EPOTES	-nepotes

[2] Dion must have lain a little south-east of Pella, according to Ptolemy, v. 15, who gives the following degrees of longitude and latitude : Scythopolis, 67° 20′, 31° 55′ ; Pella, 67° 40′, 31° 40′ ; Dion, 67° 30′, 31° 45′ ; Gerasa, 68° 15′, 31° 45′. The position marked in Mommsen's map is, therefore, wrong. It is mentioned by Josephus with Gerasa (xiii. *Antt.* xv. 3, for Essa read Gerasa) and with Pella (xiv. *Antt.* iv. 4). It is not mentioned by Polybius in the campaign of Antiochus, 218 B.C. (Pol. v. 70). The words of Steph. Byzan. are ambiguous : *Δῖον . . . κτίσμα Ἀλεξάνδρου ἢ καὶ Πέλλα ἧς τὸ ὕδωρ νοσερόν.* The reading, *ἢ καὶ Πέλλα*, is not certain, or it would prove the identity of Pella and Dion. It is singular that the *Excerpta ex Græca Notitia Patriarchatuum*, quoted by Reland, p. 215, should give, under Palestina Secunda, the name of Pella in the plural, Πέλλαι, and no Dion, but another list, p. 217, has no Pella, and reckons Dion with Gerasa in Arabia. Also, Eusebius talks of Pella in the plural, *Onomasticon*, art. Αιμαθ. Reland quotes an epigram on the bad water mentioned by Steph. Byzan. : 'Sweet is the water of Dion to drink, but drink it and thou losest thy thirst, and straightway thy life.' De Saulcy says there is a well near Kefr Abil, called by the Arabs 'Ain el Jarim, or 'The Fatal Well.' Merrill (*East of Jordan*, 298) suggests 'Eidun for Dion, but that is too much to the north-east. Dion will probably be found about Ba'un or 'Ajlun.

travelled past Gadara, led towards Raphana, an original partner of the League, whose site is unknown,[1] and, after passing some cities that joined the League later, reached Kanatha, the most easterly of the Decapolis at the foot of the Jebel Hauran.[2] Some have hesitated to place one of the earliest Greek cities so far east, but there were many Greeks in the neighbouring Boṣra even in the time of Judas Maccabeus;[3] Kanatha had always been a place of importance, and now, with Philadelphia and Gerasa, it represented the Decapolis on the margin of the desert, and on the great route from Damascus to Arabia which ran along the latter.

Raphana and Kanatha.

Damascus itself appears to have been an honorary member of the league. These, then—Scythopolis; Pella, Dion, Gerasa and Philadelphia; Gadara, Raphana and Kanatha; Hippos and Damascus—were the original ten, from which the Decapolis received its name.[4]

Damascus.

But to these ten, others were added. Ptolemy gives a

[1] Raphana was probably the Raphōn of 1 Macc. v. 37-43 (see p. 589) and of xii. *Antt.* viii. 4, near Astaroth-Karnaim, and on a wady—perhaps the present Nahr el Awâred, a tributary of the Yarmuk.

[2] Kanatha is the Kenath of the Old Testament (Num. xxxii. 42; 1 Chron. ii. 23; see p. 579, n. 3), now called Kanawât, but according to Wetzstein (*Reisebericht*, p. 78) by the Bedouin always Kanawa. We were, unfortunately, turned back by the authorities on our visit to Kanawat and Boṣra. Full accounts of the great ruins in Burckhardt, *Syria*, 83; Buckingham, *Travels among Arab Tribes*, 242 ff.; Porter, *Five Years in Damascus*, ch. xi.; Merrill, *East of the Jordan*, 36-42. Inscriptions in Wadd. 2329-2363; Wetzstein, *Ausg. Inschr.* (see p. 15, n. 1), 188-193. For coins, De Saulcy (*Numis. de la T. S.*, 400 f.). Porter gives a long and adequate argument for the identification of Kanatha with Kanawat. In the Peutinger Tables it is given as thirty-seven miles (Roman) from Aena (Phæna), which is twenty-four from Damascus. Κάνωθα and Κέναθα were other forms of the name.

[3] See p. 588.

[4] They form the earliest list, given by Pliny, *H.N.* v. 16 (18). Damascus must have been unknown to Josephus as an ordinary member of the League, for he calls Scythopolis the greatest of the Decapolis.

list with eighteen names, leaving out Raphana and adding nine others, which it is interesting to note lay mostly towards Damascus, and away from the Decapolitan region proper in North Gilead.[1] The most important of the additions were three.

Abila, Kanata, Kapitolias.

Abila lay about twelve miles east of Gadara, on a branch of the Yarmuk.[2] Kanata is distinguished from Kanatha by the different spelling of its name on coins and inscriptions, as well as by the fact that an aqueduct which one inscription describes as running to Kanata started too low to have carried water to Kanatha. On the strength of another inscription, Wetzstein has placed Kanata at El-Kerak, in the Nukra, but the neighbouring El-Kuniyeh seems to have some echo of the name.[3] Kapitolias, which from its Latin name appears to have been added to the Decapolis only after Trajan had extended the Empire to the desert,[4] was either Beit-er-Ras, House of the Headland, a few knolls covered by remains of Greek carving near Irbid, or some site farther north.[5] Other towns of

[1] See next page.

[2] On a Palmyrene inscription (Reland, pp. 525 ff.), *'Αβίλη τῆς Δεκαπόλεος* (and to be distinguished from the Abila on the Abana, north-west of Damascus, after which Abilene of Luke iii. 1 was named). It was first discovered by Seetzen (*Reisen.*, i. 371 f.), 25th Feb. 1806, and the site and ruins are fully described by Schumacher, *Abila of the Decapolis*; cf. *Onomasticon*, art. Αβελ; De Saulcy, *Numis. de la T. S.*, 308-312.

[3] See Wadd. 2296 (the inscription about the aqueduct), 2329, 2412*a*-9. Wetzstein, *Ausgewählte Inschr.*, 183-186. De Saulcy, *Numis. de la T. S.*, 399 ff., plate xxiii., where on 8 is ΚΑΝΑΤΗΝΩΝ, a coin of Kanata, but on 10 ΚΑΝΑΘ-ΝΩΝ, a coin of Kanatha.

[4] It dated its era from 97 or 98, the accession of Trajan, De Saulcy, p. 305.

[5] Beit Ras suits the position of Kapitolias in the Peutinger Tables; but not, as Schürer points out (*Hist.* II. i. p. 106, n. 205), the data of the Itinerarium Antonini, which requires a site farther north. We found no inscriptions, but some beautiful Greek carving at Beit-Ras. Beit-Ras lies on the direct road from Edrei to Gadara.

this wider Decapolis were such as Edrei, Bosra, and some of their neighbours.

'The region of the Decapolis.'

Each of these cities of the Decapolis had not only its suburbs, but commanded besides a large territory, with villages.[1] Round Hippos there was a Hippene,[2] round Gadara a country of the Gadarenes.[3] Gadara had a sea-board on the Lake of Galilee. Some of her coins bear the image of a trireme. We did not, however, realise how far the property and influence of the Greek cities extended till we followed the great aqueduct which brought water to Gadara from as far east as Edrei. Such long works as this prove that the cities of the Decapolis possessed rights, and could exercise authority at distances even greater than those which separated them from each other. The Decapolitan region, as Pliny calls it,[4] *the borders of the Decapolis*, as it is styled in the Gospels, was, therefore, no mere name, but an actual sphere of property and effective influence. The territories of Pella, Scythopolis, Gadara and Hippos, which adjoined each other, alone represented a solid belt of country along the Jordan.[5] East and north-east from this ran the aqueduct of Gadara for more than thirty miles; all Gilead itself was at one time called the region of Gerasa.[6] If, then, we omit Damascus, we may determine the 'region of the Decapolis' to have been most of the country south-east of the Lake of Galilee across Gilead to the desert, but Pliny's words about it, that it

[1] Josephus, *Life*, 65.
[2] *Id.* iii. *Wars*, iii. 1.
[3] Mark v. 1, according to one reading.
[4] V. 15, *Decapolita regio.*
[5] Query: Did it completely cut off Peræa from Galilee?
[6] So Jerome in the fourth century.

was interpenetrated by the tetrarchies, forbid us to assume that it was absolutely solid.[1]

From this investigation we turn now to a description of these wonderful Greek cities, their sites, their buildings, and the life which thronged them.

The sites of the 'ten cities.'

When the Greeks occupied new sites their choice was mainly determined, of course, by questions of commerce and defence. Thus Hippos has no water, but lies on a strong eminence just above the Lake of Galilee, where the great road breaks north-east to Damascus. Thus Gadara stood on a headland above the Jordan Valley—a broad, fresh stage for city life, which steep, deep slopes on three sides constituted a formidable fortress. In spite of its feeble spring, this is so incomparable a site, that even if it was not historical before the Greeks, —which is so unlikely that one is inclined to fix here Ramoth-Gilead,—the Greeks could not possibly have neglected it. But the favourite Greek site was different from these. It was a mound or ridge by a shallow stream—one of the characteristic Peræan brooks, ten to twelve feet wide, and a foot deep, with a smaller mound, perhaps, on the other side, and meadow and arable land in the neighbourhood. These are the natural features common to Scythopolis, Pella, Gerasa, Philadelphia, Abila and Kanatha—most of which have besides a far and splendid view. The architectural features were also similar. There were the usual buildings of a Greek city of the Roman period, the colonnaded street, the arch, the forum, the temple, the theatre, the bath, the mausoleum, in florid

The favourite Greek site.

The architecture.

[1] Pliny, *H.N.*, v. 16. See above, p. 540.

Doric and Corinthian, with the later Christian basilica among them, and perhaps a martyrion, or martyrs' monument. Approach any of these sites of the Decapolis, and this is the order in which you are certain to meet with their remains. Almost at the moment at which your eye catches a cluster of columns, or the edge of an amphitheatre against the sky, your horses' hoofs will clatter upon pavement. You cannot ride any more. You must walk up this causeway, which the city laid far out from its gates. You must feel the clean tight slabs of basalt, so well laid at first that most of them lie square still. You must draw your hand along the ruts worn deep by the chariot wheels of fifteen, eighteen centuries ago. If the road runs between banks there will be tombs in the limestone, with basalt lintels, and a Roman name on them in Greek letters, perhaps a basalt or a limestone sarcophagus flung out on the road by some Arab hunter for treasure. If it is a waterless site like Gadara you will find an aqueduct running with the road, the pipes hewn out of solid basalt, with a diameter like our drain-pipes, and fitting to each other, as these do, with flanges. But if it be the more characteristic site by a stream, you will come to a bridge, one of those narrow parapetless Roman bridges which were the first to span the Syrian rivers, and have had so few successors. You reach the arch, or heap of ruins, that marks the old gateway. Within is an open space, probably the forum, and from this right through the city you can trace the line of the long colonnaded street. Generally nothing but the bases of the columns remain, as *in the street, called Straight*, of Damascus, or as at Gadara; but at Philadelphia ten or twelve columns still stand to their

Roads, bridges, streets.

full height, and in the famous street of Gerasa nearly two hundred. This last street was lined by public and private buildings, with very rich façades. At Gadara you can still see a by-street with plain vaulted buildings, probably stores or bazaars.

The best preserved buildings, however, are the amphitheatres, the most beautiful are the temples.

Some cities of the Decapolis had each two amphitheatres. Those ample, solid basins, with their high tiers of benches for spectators, were either built above vaulted chambers that were used for the actors, the victims and the wild beasts of the great shows ; or else, as at Philadelphia, Kanatha and one of the Gadara theatres, they rested on the hollow side of a hill. They faced in all directions of north and west—the Philadelphian, the Gerasan two, and one of Gadara looked due north, but the second Gadarene west, and those of Kanatha and Scythopolis west or north-west. The largest was the Philadelphian, which held perhaps seven thousand spectators ; the rest must have varied from two to four thousand. Over against the benches, in some theatres, the post-scenium still rises, a high wall ornate with pillars, brackets, and niches. Several cities contained another place of Greek amusement. Where the stream, after passing through the town, issues from the wall, you see, as at Gerasa, the stout banks of a Naumachia, with remains of tiers of benches behind them. For, even on the borders of the desert the wave-born Greeks built their mimic seas, and fought their sham sea-fights. With all these public stages, most of the cities had their annual *Παγκράτια*, or games in which every kind of athletic exercise was exhibited.

Amphitheatres.

The Naumachy.

Some of the temples were very beautiful, as we may still see from the well-preserved ruins at Kanatha and Gerasa. Oblong in shape, their central hall was usually from fifty to seventy feet by thirty to fifty. They were peripteral, with a double row of columns in the front. They did not stand on the highest part of the town, but always on a platform approached by stately steps. The religion of the Decapolis was thoroughly Greek. In other towns of Eastern Palestine we find the shrines of many of the Nabatean gods, either with their own names, or thinly disguised under those of their Greek counterparts. But in the Decapolis the gods of Hellas were supreme. Alone of Semitic deities was Astarte worshipped, the tower-crowned Astarte, but she was practically Hellenic. Each city worshipped her, but had in addition its own Τύχη or Civic Fortune, sometimes unnamed. In Scythopolis the people were chiefly devoted to Dionysus[1] and Astarte, in Pella to Pallas, in Gadara to Zeus, 'the most high Zeus,' Pallas, Herakles and Astarte, in Kapitolias to Astarte and Zeus, in Abila to Herakles and Astarte, in Kanatha to Zeus and Pallas, in Gerasa to Artemis—'Artemis of the Gerasenes,' like 'Diana of the Ephesians'—in Philadelphia to Pallas, but especially to Herakles, 'the Good Fortune of the Philadelphians.'[2]

The temples

And the gods of Decapolis.

You will also find the ruins of the Ten Cities strewn with reminiscences of their political constitution. The ambiguous character of their freedom—municipal independence[3] subject to the revision and patronage of the imperial authorities—could not be

Constitution of the cities.

[1] See p. 363.

[2] See the coins of these various cities in De Saulcy, *Numis. de la T. S.* Edrei alone of cities within the Decapolis has a Semitic deity, Du-Sara, on whom see next chapter: De Saulcy, p. 375.

[3] See p. 594.

better illustrated than by two fragments which I turned up within a few feet of each other in a street in Gerasa. One was the half of a tombstone of a member of the City Council with his title still legible upon it—

ΒΟΥΛΕΥΤΗΣ

The other was two feet of basalt carved with enormous letters, evidently from an inscription of honour to one of the emperors—

αυ ΤΟΚΡΑΤ *ωρ*

Fragments like these may be found in almost every ruin of the Decapolis, and they bear as decisive testimony as any exhaustive political treatise to the double character of the Decapolitan constitution. Tombs of Bouleutai you will find everywhere.[1] I append one we routed out of the modern cemetery at Edrei, where it was doing duty, upside down, as the headstone of a sheikh recently deceased. It dates from 'the fourth year of the Cæsars Marcus and Lucius' (Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus), that is, 165 A.D.[2] The Decapolis never forgot Pompey—Gadara and Pella call themselves Pompeian. Nearly all the emperors appear on their coins. Gadara has a very full list from Augustus and Tiberias onward, but it was with the Antonines, 130-180, that the Ten cities

[1] Josephus gives the *βουλή* of Tiberias at 600 members, ii. *Wars*, xxi. 9; and that of Gaza at 500, xiii. *Antt.* xiii. 3. Those of Scythopolis, Gadara, and Gerasa, can hardly have been less.

[2] Copied at Edrei, June 21, 1891, from a small slab of basalt:—

ΓΑΙΟCΛΟVΚΙΟC
ΒΑCCΟCΒΟVΛΕV
τΗCΕΠΟΗCΕΝο
ΕΚΤωΝΙΔΙωΝΤΟ
ΜΝΗΜΑΕΤΔΚΑΙCΑΡ
ΝΜΑΡΚΟΥΚΑΙΛοΥΚΙΟV.

were most flourishing. The Antonines made the great roads, and under them Gerasa put on her splendour.

Greek literature in the Decapolis.

On some of the ruins of the Decapolis there are still visible carven epigrams, reflections on death, and some longer pieces of Greek verse. These faintly witness to the great literary activity of the Ten Cities at the beginning of our era. We have already seen what famous centres of Hellenism were the coast cities in those days. But the Decapolis had also its personages in Greek literature. Gadara produced Philodemus the Epicuræan, a contemporary of Cicero, Meleager the epigrammatist, Menippus the satirist, Theodorus the rhetorician, the tutor of Tiberius,[1] and others.[2] Gerasa also was a mother of great teachers.[3]

The Decapolis and the Gospels.

We may now touch again a subject we touched before —the influence of all this Greek life on Galilee, and the beginnings of Christianity. The Decapolis was flourishing in the time of Christ's ministry. Gadara, with her temples and her amphitheatres, with her art, her games and her literature, overhung the Lake of Galilee, and the voyages of its fishermen. A leading Epicuræan of the previous generation, the founder of the Greek anthology, some of the famous wits of the day, the reigning emperor's tutor, had all been bred within sight of the homes of the writers of the New Testament. Philodemus, Meleager, Menippus, Theodorus, were names of which the one end of the Lake of Galilee was proud, when Matthew, Peter, James and John, were working at the other end. The temples of Zeus, Pallas,

[1] Strabo xvii. ii. 29; cf. Schürer, *Hist.* ii. 1, 29.

[2] Reland, p. 775; Schürer, p. 104.

[3] Stephanus Byzantinus, under Γέρασα, mentions three, Ariston, Kerykos and Plato. Cf. Schürer, *op. cit.* pp. 29, 121.

and Astarte crowned a height opposite to that which gave its name to the Sermon on the Mount. Bacchus, under his Greek name, ruled the territory down the Jordan Valley to Scythopolis. There was another temple to Zeus on the other side of Galilee, at Ptolemais, almost within sight of Nazareth. We cannot believe that the two worlds, which this one landscape embraced, did not break into each other. The many roads which crossed Galilee from the Decapolis to the coast, the many inscriptions upon them, the constant trade between the fishermen and the Greek exporters of their fish, the very coins—everywhere thrust Greek upon the Jews of Galilee. The Aramæic dialect began now to be full of Greek words. It is impossible to believe that our Lord and His disciples did not know Greek. But, at least, in that characteristic Greek city overhanging the Lake of Galilee, in the scholars it sent forth to Greece and Rome, we have ample proof that the kingdom of God came forth in no obscure corner, but in the very face of the kingdoms of this world.

CHAPTER XXIX

HAURAN AND ITS CITIES



For this Chapter consult Maps I. and III

HAURAN AND ITS CITIES

WE pass from the Decapolis to other cities of Eastern Palestine, very different in origin and character.

In the Decapolis, as we have seen, the life was Greek. Rome gave the shelter, and the authority of the Empire was supreme, but the arts, letters, manners, and religion were of Greece. On those noble stages of life the seeds of Hellenism had been planted for three hundred years; as soon as Pompey fenced them, there sprang up the characteristic forms of Greek civilisation. With the cities of Hauran and the Trachon it was different. Their civilisation mostly dates from a century later than that of the Decapolis, and when it appeared it was not pure Greek, but a mixture of Greek and Semitic, still cast, however, in the great moulds of the Empire. In the Decapolis Rome sheltered Greeks; in those other cities she disciplined half-Greek Syrians and wild Arabs.

The two civilisations of Decapolis and Hauran.

To understand this we must survey Hauran and the story of its slow civilisation first by Roman vassals and then by the emperors themselves.

Hauran, or 'Hollow,'[1] is the name given to the great plain which stretches south from Hermon, between Jaulan

[1] See p. 552.

and the Lejá, and thence, between the mountains of Gilead and the Jebel Hauran, runs out upon the Desert. In a wider application the name covers also the Lejá and all fertile ground to the east.

Description of Hauran.

To this great Plain you rise from Pharpar[1] and the lands of Damascus by a series of terraces, each from three to four miles broad. When you have shaken off some hills to the east you are out upon Hauran proper, 2000 feet high, and the ground stretching level before you to the horizon. Hermon shuts off a quarter of heaven in the north-west, but round all the rest of the circle you feel only the openness, the light, the equal sweep of prairie air. Is it night—over the free distance the bells of the camel-caravans reach your ears an hour before the camels pass. Is it morning—the mists as they lift have nothing higher than a tower to tear themselves away from, and the great Hajj road unrolls to the horizon. Is it noon—the heat does not swelter above the shadeless soil, but the wind sweeps fresh, as at sea, with the swing of fifty open miles upon it. The surface of the plain is broken only by a mound or two, by a few shallow watercourses, by some short outcrops of basalt, and by villages of the same stone, the level black line of their roofs cut by a tower or the jagged gable of an old temple. All else is a rolling prairie of rich, red soil, under wheat, or lying for the year fallow in pasture. It is a land of harvests, and if you traverse it in summer fills you with the wonder of its wealth. Through the early day the camels, piled high with sheaves, five or seven swaying corn-stacks on a string, draw in from the fields to the threshing-floors.

Its harvests.

[1] The present Nahr el ʻAwaj is probably Pharpar.

These lie along the village walls, each of them some fifty square yards of the plain, trodden hard and fenced by a low, dry dyke. The sheaves are strewn to the depth of two or three feet, and the threshing-sledges, curved slabs of wood, studded with basalt teeth, are dragged up and down by horses, driven by boys who stand on the sledges and sing as they plunge over the billows of straw. Poor men have their smaller crops trodden out by donkeys driven in a narrow circle three abreast, exactly in the fashion depicted on the old Egyptian monuments. When the whole mass is cut and bruised enough, it is tossed with great forks against the afternoon wind, the chopped straw is stored for fodder in some ancient vault that has kept the rain out since the days of Agrippa or the Antonines; but the winnowed grain is packed in bags and carried on camels to the markets of Damascus and Acre. The long lines of these 'grain-boats' sail down all the summer roads; one evening at Ghabaghib, our first station out of Damascus, we counted 187 pass our tent, and at the Bridge-of-the-Daughters-of-Jacob, *over Jordan the Way of the Sea*, the train of them has been known not to break all night through. Hauran wheat is famous round the Levant. The failure of the camel carriage to export an average crop—some years part of it has to be left to rot unreaped—reconciles one to the invasion of Hauran by the Acre-Damascus railway.

Its treelessness.

The fertility of this Plain is not more striking than its want of trees. Except the groves lately planted round the governor's seat at El-Merkez, there are practically no trees in Hauran.[1] The

[1] Though on the Jebel Hauran there are many oaks.

people, therefore, use marvellously little timber. The threshing-sledges, the yokes and ploughs, the long axles on which the giant millstones are trundled from the Lejá to Damascus, in every village a few doors, stools, and boxes—that is all. The rafters, the ceilings, most of the doors, the lattices and window-bars, are of stone. The originality to which this want of wood stimulated the ancient architects of Hauran will be noticed further on, but here we may linger for a little on the singular and astonishing appearance which the unrelieved use of the sombre basalt gives to towns built fifteen hundred years ago, and in many cases still standing as the builder left them. One remembers the weirdness of wandering as a child through the Black Cities of the *Arabian Nights*; one feels this weirdness again in the cities of Hauran. Under the strong sun, the basalt takes on a sullen sheen like polished ebony; the low and level architecture is unrelieved even by threads of mortar, for the blocks were cut so fine, and lie so heavy on each other, that no cement was needed for the building; there is, besides, an utter absence of trees, bush, ivy and all green. This weirdness is naturally greatest where the cities, emptied of their inhabitants more than a thousand years ago, still stand tenantless. An awful silence fills the sable ruins; there is never a face, nor a flower, nor the flutter of a robe in all the bare, black streets. But the fascination is shared even by the towns into which this generation has crept back, and patched their ruins with bricks of last winter's mud. In these, I have seen the yellow sheaves piled high against the black walls, and the dust of the threshing-floors rising thick in the sunbeams, but the sunshine showed so pallid and ineffectual

Its black cities.

above the sullen stone, that what I looked on seemed to be, not the flesh and blood and labour of to-day, but the phantasm of some ancient summer afternoon flung magically back upon its desolate and irresponsive stage. From such dreams one is always wakened by the fresh Hauran wind, the breath and quickening of the Plain.

This rich and healthy Plain is dominated by Hermon. On Hauran you are never out of sight of Hermon. Eighty miles away he is still visible, and even on the slopes of the Jebel Hauran the ancient amphitheatres were so arranged that over the stage the spectators might have a view of the great hill. It is a singular companionship of a noble mountain and a noble plain.

Hauran and Hermon.

> 'There is right at the west end of Itaille,
> Down at the root of Vesulus the cold,
> A lusty plain abundant of vitaille,
> Where many a tower and town thou mayest behold
> That founded were in time of fathers old,
> And many another délectable sight;
> And Salucës this noble country hight.'

On the east the Plain is framed by a long low line of blue. As you approach, the blue darkens, and stands out an irregular bank of shiny black rock, from thirty to forty feet high, split by narrow crevasses as the edge of a mud-heap is split on a frosty day. Climb it and you stand on the margin of a vast mass of congealed lava, three hundred and fifty square miles in extent, which has flowed out upon the Plain from some of the now extinct craters in the centre of it, and cooling, has broken up into innumerable cracks and fissures. Sometimes it

The Lejá.

looks like an ebony glacier with irregular crevasses Elsewhere it 'has the appearance of the sea, when in motion beneath a dark, cloudy sky, and when the waves are of good size, but without any white crests of foam.'[1] Here and there the eddies of liquid lava have been caught in the very swirl of them, or, as it broke in large bubbles and curved over in sluggish waves, the viscous mass has been fixed for ever to the forms of sharp-edged hollows and caverns. This 'petrified ocean' is without neither soil nor fresh water. Springs abound, there are even a few small lakes, and there are many fields. The ruins of villages are numerous, and a number of the crevasses have been artificially widened to admit the passage of roads.

This Lejá, this Trachon, not high, but wild and very intricate, almost bridges the quiet plain between Hermon and the Jebel Hauran, and has at most periods enabled the inhabitants of these two ranges to combine and tyrannise over the peaceful populations of Hauran proper and Damascus.

The coming of the Romans to Hauran.

In the beginning of the first century before Christ Hermon was held by the half-settled Ituræans; the Western Hauran was under the Jew, Alexander Janneus, while the Nabateans occupied everything else to the east, including Damascus, the rest of Hauran, and the Lejá.[2] When the Romans came in 64 B.C.,[3] besides freeing the Greek cities of Gaulanitis and Gilead from the Jews, they drove the Nabateans to the southern edge of Hauran, where their northernmost

[1] Merrill, *East of Jordan*, p. 11.

[2] See end of last chapter.

[3] Pompey sent Scaurus with the first legions to Damascus in 65 B.C., and himself followed in 64; when he went to Europe next year he left Scaurus behind, who subdued the Nabateans.

cities continued to be Bosra and Salkhat.[1] But the Romans did not then occupy Hauran itself.[2] For the next forty years the reports are meagre. In 25, Trachonitis and Hauran were under the nominal rule of one Zenodorus, who had also leased part of the Ituræan domains on the slopes of Hermon.[3] He did not protect the peaceful inhabitants from the robbers of the Lejá, and they appealed to Varro, the Governor of Syria. Augustus ordered Varro to displace Zenodorus by Herod, who had already conducted war in this region, and to whom Gadara and Hippos,[4] on its western borders, for the time belonged.[5] Herod had great difficulty with the Arab robbers of the Lejá,[6] and their allies the Nabateans.[7] It was only after he had put a

Herod the Great in Hauran.

[1] There is a Nabatean inscription in Bosra of the eleventh year of Malchus II. (not Malchus I. as designated by Schürer, *Hist.* div. I. vol. ii. p. 335, for there was an earlier Nabatean Malchus, known to us from coins only, whom Schürer omits from his lists), *i.e.* about 40 B.C., *C.I.S.* II. i. No. 174.

[2] There was a Roman governor in Damascus at least from 44 to 42 B.C. (xiv. *Antt.* xi. 7; xii. 1; i. *Wars*, xii. 1, 2). Somewhere about 36 Mark Antony gave Cleopatra 'Cœle-Syria' (see p. 538) and parts of the Judæan and Arabian territories (Josephus, xv. *Antt.* iii. 8, iv. 1, 2; i. *Wars*, xviii. 5).

[3] xv. *Antt.* x. 1; i. *Wars*, xx. 4. That Zenodorus was ruler of Trachonitis is expressly said; that he also ruled Auranitis is obvious from his attempt to sell it to the Nabateans (xv. *Antt.* x. 2).

[4] In 32 B.C. Herod had been defeated by Nabateans at Kanatha (i. *Wars*, xix. 2; at Kana, xv. *Antt.* v. 1), but had afterwards subdued them.

[5] Since 30 B.C.: xv. *Antt.* vii. 3; i. *Wars*, xx. 3.

[6] Varro himself had previously punished them, i. *Wars*, xx. 4.

[7] First he routed the Trachonites, 'procuring peace and quietness for the neighbouring peoples' (xv. *Antt.* x. 1; i. *Wars*, xx. 4). But they, 'obliged to live quietly, which they did not like, and when they took pains with the ground it bare but little,' took advantage of his absence in Rome to revolt (xvi. *Antt.* ix. 1). His troops subdued them, forty of their chiefs escaping to Nabatea. On his return he slew some who remained in Trachon, whereupon the forty fugitives had a blood-feud against him, and, in alliance with the Nabateans, harassed his borders. Herod put a garrison of 3000 Idumæans into Trachonitis. But, in taking the punishment of the Nabateans into his

garrison of 3000 Idumæans in Trachonitis, and called a Jew named Zamaris from Babylonia, and built for him in Batanea fortresses and a village called Bathyra,[1] that he was successful. Zamaris kept down the robbers of the Lejá,[2] 'protected Jews coming up on pilgrimage from Babylon,' and, when Herod declared freedom from taxes, 'the land became full of people.'[3] A few public buildings were erected. A temple near Kanatha was built, in the bulk of it, by Herod,[4] and the ruins still contain an inscription recording the erection of a statue to him. This is the earliest Greek inscription discovered in these regions.[5] Herod was evidently the pioneer of civilisation in Hauran.

Philip the Tetrarch, B.C. 4-A.D. 34.

At Herod's death in 4 B.C., Philip, his son, received for a tetrarchy Gaulanitis, Batanea, Trachonitis, Auranitis, and a 'certain part of the domain of Zenodorus,' or all the country from Hermon to the Yarmuk.[6] He was greatly helped by Jakim, the son of Zamaris, who supplied him with cavalry.[7] His just and gentle reign has no annals; the only account of his kingdom is that of Strabo, who, writing of the Trachons about 25 A.D., that is, when Christ was beginning to preach in Galilee, says that 'the barbarians used to rob the mer-

own hands, he displeased Augustus. The Nabateans, in this, 'refused to pay for their pastures,' *i.e.* overran Hauran, as usual every year, with their own flocks. Then he called Zamaris as above (xvii. *Antt.* ii. 1-3).

[1] xvii. *Antt.* ii. 1, 2. Does the name Bathyra survive in Busr-(el-Hariri) on the south margin of the Lejá?

[2] It is not asserted that he conquered the Lejá itself.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] It is at Seia, now Si'a, half an hour from Kanawat, De Vogüé, *Syrie Centrale: Archit. Civile et Religieuse*, vol. i. pl. 1. It was to begin with a Nabatean building. The inscription on the statue of Herod is given by Wadd. 2364. The erector was one Obaisatos.

[5] The date of another monument and inscription at Suwêda (Soada) of Odairatos, the son of Annelus, is uncertain. It belongs to the first century either before or after Christ. Wadd. 2320; De Vogüé, as above, pl. 1.

[6] See pp. 540 ff.

[7] xvii. *Antt.* ii. 1-2.

chants most generally on the side of Arabia Felix, but this happens less frequently since the destruction of robber bands under Zenodorus, by the good government of the Romans, and as a result of the security afforded by the soldiers stationed in Syria.'[1] This means that though Arab raids still happened, they were less frequent. In the records of Christ's ministry we never hear even a rumour of Arabs, but we see bits of the big bulwark which, Strabo says, was keeping them away—the Centurion, the Legion, the superscription of Cæsar. Something, however, of the difficulties of communication, and of the insecurity which prevailed in spite of the Romans, may be felt in such parables as that of the binding of the strong man and spoiling of his goods, or that of the wicked husbandmen who slew their master's heir.

Herod Agrippa, A.D. 37-44.

At Philip's death in 34 his tetrarchy was taken back into the Province of Syria, but was allowed to administer its own revenues.[2] In 37 Caligula bestowed it upon Herod Agrippa,[3] who afterwards received the rest of his grandfather's domains. Agrippa's territory extended as far east as the further slopes of the Jebel Hauran, where an inscription of his has been discovered.[4] But the Nabateans, under King Aretas, still held Boṣra and Salkhat, and for the time Damascus had been yielded to them by the Romans.

The Conversion of Paul.

Paul tells us that when he came back to Damascus from Arabia, three years after his conversion, *an ethnarch under Aretas the king*[5] *held the city of the Damascenes*;[6] and while we have imperial coins of Damascus under

[1] Strabo xvi. 2, § 20.
[2] xviii *Antt.* iv. 6.
[3] xviii. *Antt.* vi. 6-10; ii. *Wars*, ix. 5.
[4] At El-Mushennef, Wadd. 2211.
[5] Aretas, iv., 9 B.C.-40 A.D.
[6] 2 Cor. xi. 32, cf. Acts ix. 23 ff.

Augustus and Tiberius down to 33 A.D., we have none under Caligula or Claudius, or till the ninth year of Nero in 63. How Damascus had come from the Romans into the hands of Aretas we do not know;[1] and we are equally ignorant of the reasons that led the Nabatean ethnarch to take the side of the Damascus Jews, and seek, on their request, to arrest Paul.[2] Three years earlier the synagogues of Damascus had presumably sufficient independence and authority to give up to Paul and his commission from the high priest such Jews as had gone over to Christianity. On that occasion Paul's journey to Damascus from Jerusalem took him across some part of Hauran. The Arabia into which he went after his conversion was not Hauran, as some imagine,[3] but either the lonely Harras to the east of the Lejá or Nabatea proper,—Boṣra, Salkhat, Petra, and farther south, perhaps, to Sinai.[4] Agrippa found Hauran not yet perfectly civilised. In a proclamation of date 41 A.D. he appears to exhort the inhabitants to leave off their

[1] Some think he took it by war on the withdrawal of the troops of Vitellius, when the death of Tiberius took place (xviii. *Antt.* v. 3). So Neander, *Planting and Training of the Christian Church*, Eng. Ed. iii. 2; Porter, *Five Years in Damascus*, i. 103. But that the Romans should let a town like Damascus go by war seems incredible; so Conybeare and Howson, *Life and Epistles of St. Paul*, and Schürer favour the theory that Caligula gave Damascus to Aretas (*Hist.* i. ii. 357 f). Perhaps when Herod Agrippa got Philip's tetrarchy, it was felt by Caligula that the great foe of the Herodian house should also get some territory. Aretas had defeated Herod Antipas a few years before (Josephus, xviii. *Antt.* v. 3).

[2] The Jews of Damascus were very numerous and powerful (ii. *Wars*, xx. 2; vii. *Wars*, viii. 7), but perhaps there had been under Caligula's rearrangement of Syria a new agreement of Aretas with Agrippa and the Jews. Aretas had been the sworn foe of Herod Antipas.

[3] *E.g.* Woldemar Schmidt, in Herzog's *Real Encyclopädie* (ed. 2) xi. 364.

[4] Gal. i. 16, 17, cf. On *Mount Sinai*, iv. 25. Whether Paul preached in Arabia is very doubtful. It does not necessarily follow, as Porter thinks, from a comparison of ver. 16 with ver. 17 in Gal. i.

beast-like manner of life in caves, and build themselves houses.[1] This proclamation breathes the confidence of ability to protect the Hauranites, and has even been called 'the point of departure for the architectural history of the country.'[2] Certain it is that whereas from before this date we possess only two Greek inscriptions[3] from Hauran, among many in the Nabatean language, Greek inscriptions now rapidly multiply, and we have numerous records in stone of the building of public edifices.

Interval of Roman rule, A.D. 44-50.

Agrippa died in 44, in the fashion described in the Book of Acts,[4] and as his son Agrippa was just seventeen, the Romans resumed the administration of all Palestine by a Procurator under the Governor of Syria.[5] The only inscription from this period is in Nabatean, at Hebran, south of Kanatha, 'of the seventh year of Claudius Cæsar.'[6] From this we ascertain that the boundary between the Roman province (or the kingdom of Agrippa) and the Nabatean kingdom, ran south of Hebran, but north of Bosra and Salkhat, for these latter were cities of the Nabatean kings.[7]

[1] Wadd. 2329*a*, an inscription in Kanatha. But the inscription is fragmentary, and the above interpretation doubtful. In any case, the proclamation cannot have been meant for Kanatha, which had been a free city with coins since Pompey's time.

[2] De Vogüé, *Architecture Civile et Religieuse de la Syrie Centrale.*

[3] The one about the statue to Herod, see p. 618; and another on a monument at Suwêda, ancient Soada, south of Kanawat, which is also given in Nabatean. Wadd. 2320; De Vogüé, *op. cit.* Pl. I.; *C.I.S.*, Pars II. tom. I. No. 162, where it is ascribed, because of the form of the Nabatean letters, to the first century before Christ.

[4] xii. 20 ff., cf. Josephus, xix. *Antt.* viii. 2; ii. *Wars*, xi. 6.

[5] xix. *Antt.* ix. 1, 2; ii. *Wars*, xi. 6.

[6] שנת שבע לקלדיסקיסר; in *C.I.S.*, Pars II. tom. I. No. 170. It records the erection of a portal by Maliku, a priest of the goddess Allat.

[7] For Bosra, see above, p. 617, n. 1. In Salkhat there are two inscriptions: one of the seventeenth year of Malchus III. (not Malchus II. as designated by Schürer, see p. 617 *n.* 1), *i.e.* about 65 A.D.; the other of the twenty-fifth year of Rab'el, *i.e.* 95 or 96 A.D.

In 50, Agrippa II. received from Claudius the kingdom of Chalcis in the Lebanon,[1] and in 53 the old tetrarchies of Philip and Lysanias,[2] so that once more Hauran came under a Jewish prince. He was the very worst of his line. This enthusiast for Nero, this trifler with Paul, this pander to his sister's shame, this purveyor of Roman rejoicings at his people's overthrow, this royal camp-follower, this ape whom Titus led about, has caused himself to be styled in his Hauran inscriptions the Great King, Lover of Cæsar, Pious, Lover of Rome.[3] He called his first capital after Nero,[4] through sore humiliation he held to all the Flavian emperors, and it is perhaps a sign of the same subserviency that the only inscription which has been discovered recognising the three months' reign of Otho is one upon Agrippa's domains in Hauran.[5] There are still extant several buildings from the second

Agrippa II., A.D. 50-100.

[1] The kingdom of his uncle Herod; xx. *Antt.* v. 2; ii. *Wars*, xii. 1.

[2] The latter included Abila and the Lebanon domains of Varus, which stretched far north (xx. *Antt.* vii. 1, note the curious order; ii. *Wars*, xii. 8); afterwards some parts of Galilee and Peræa were added (xx. *Antt.* viii. 4; ii. *Wars*, xiii. 2).

[3] *βασιλεὺς μέγας, φιλοκαίσαρ, εὐσεβὴς καὶ φιλορώμαιος*; on an inscription at Si'a, near Kanatha, Waddington, 2365.

[4] See p. 475.

[5] Discovered by us on the top of a straw-store at Tuffas, two hours north-west of El-Muzeirib, on 19th June 1891 (see *Critical Review*, ii. 59). On the death of Nero in 68, Agrippa II., and Titus, the latter sent by Vespasian, set out from Syria to Rome to salute Galba, but heard on the way of Galba's death. Agrippa went on to salute Otho, but Titus returned to his father with the news, and Vespasian's legions, then on the east of the Lake of Galilee, within a few hours of Tuffas, took the oath to Otho. Here is the inscription carved in curious oblong letters; the Ω being shaped like the Hebrew letter shin:

L ΔΡΤΠΕΡΤΗΣΑΤΤΟΚRΑΙ....
CΤΟΤΜΑΡΚΟΤΟΘΩΝΟΣΣΩΤΗΙ ....
ΛΟΦ ΙΗΣΔΙΟΓΕΝΟΤΣΠΑΤΗΡΤΙ..
ΣΤΟ ΝΣΤΝ ΑΙΣΔΤΣΙΨΑΛΙΣΙΟΙΚ..
ΓΚ ΕΙΑΣΧΑΡΙΝΤ. .

Agrippa's reign, and numerous inscriptions: for instance, the latest portions of the temple at Si'a,[1] a temple at Es-Sunamein, on the Hajj road south of Damascus, the inscriptions there and elsewhere.[2] Agrippa died in 100, and his territories appear again to have fallen within the Roman Province of Syria.

The new province of Arabia. A.D. 100.

During this period the Nabateans continued to surround Agrippa's territories on the south, where they still occupied Bosra and Salkhat;[3] and on the east, where they held a post even as far north as Admedera, the first station on the road from Damascus to Palmyra,[4]—Damascus itself had been taken back from them by the Romans in the reign of Nero,[5]—but in 106 A.D., Trajan, by the hands of Cornelius Palma, Governor of Syria, brought the whole Nabatean kingdom into the

[1] See p. 618, n. 4.

[2] We found the slab with the inscription at Es-Sunamein, serving as the end of the village sheikh's dust-box. I have reproduced it in the *Critical Review*, ii. (1892), p. 56. I find it was previously given in *Z.D.P.V.* vii. (1884), pp. 121 f. It records the dedication of a portal, with little victories, images, and little lions, to 'Zeus the Lord.' The double date, 'the thirty-seventh year, which is also the thirty-second of King Agrippa,' I explained in the *Critical Review* by the difference between Agrippa's right to succeed his father in 44-45 A.D. and his actual accession to a kingdom in 49-50. Schürer (*Hist.*, Div. I. vol. ii. pp. 194 f.) refers the smaller number to an era of Agrippa II. beginning in 61, and the greater to a supposed era beginning five years earlier in 56. For this latter there is no evidence whatever. I think De Saulcy is right in interpreting the former as an era, not of Agrippa himself but of Cæsarea-Philippi. I therefore hold to the interpretation which I gave in the *Critical Review*.

[3] There are two Nabatean inscriptions at Salkhat: one of the seventeenth year of Malchus III. (not Malchus II., as Schurer designates him, see p. 617), *i.e.* about 65 A.D.; one of the twenty-fifth year of Rab'el, *i.e.* 95 or 96 A.D.; besides a third of uncertain date; *C.I.S.* Pars II. tom. I. No. 182-184.

[4] The present Dmer or Maksurah, *C.I.S.*, Pars II. tom. I. No. 161. This inscription also belongs to the reign of Rab'el, 71-106 A.D.: cf. Wadd. 2562 g.

[5] 53-68 A.D.

Empire, and created out of it the new Province of Arabia, with Bosra as the capital.[1]

Civilisation of Hauran.

This was the most decisive step in the history of Hauran. The fertile plain was no longer the ragged edge of civilisation, but an inner province of the Empire. Between the wilderness and herself there was organised another Roman province, and the wonderful Roman frontier. Therefore, with 106 A.D., the often checked civilisation of Hauran may be said to have got fairly under way. The Romans immediately instituted public works. The aqueduct already mentioned from El-Afîne to Kanata was built by Cornelius Palma himself,[2] and other great aqueducts and reservoirs are probably to be assigned to about the same date. During the second and third centuries, basilicas, temples, theatres,[3] multiplied in the old cities: but a still more evident sign of prosperity was the rise of a multitude of villages to the rank of cities. Those ruins, so numerous, that as you travel across Hauran you are never out of sight of some of them, so strongly built of their basalt, that from many it seems as though their inhabitants had fled but yesterday —these are the shells of the Roman peace. In some primeval tranquillity of man, 'giant cities of Bashan' may have risen, as is alleged,[4] on this margin of the desert; but if so, these are not their ruins. With the exception of a stray inscription to a Hebrew Herod and Agrippa, to a Nabatean Malchus or Rab'el, themselves but Roman vassals, there is in Hauran no written record of a life

[1] Dio Cassius, lxviii. 14: *Πάλμας τῆς Συρίας ἄρχων τὴν Ἀραβίαν τὴν πρὸς τῇ Πέτρᾳ ἐχειρώσατο, καὶ Ῥωμαίων ὑπήκοον ἐποιήσατο.* Cf. Reland; Mommsen, *Prov. of the Roman Empire*, II.

[2] Waddington, 2296-97; cf. 2301, 2308.

[3] Like the one in Bosra.

[4] Porter, *Giant Cities of Bashan.* Cf. Wetzstein, *Reisebericht*, pp. 81 f.

earlier than the beginning of the Empire by Trajan. Thereafter inscriptions abound. The letters are Greek, the religion of which they speak may be Syrian, but the civil power they acknowledge is Rome. The Legions have left their stamp everywhere. In Bashan there is scarcely a single ruin but it bears upon it the name of at least one of the Emperors. As in Decapolis, so in Hauran, you stumble on bits of basalt with some of the syllables of Autokrator upon them: the letters are Greek, but they only translate Imperator. The gods of the temples bear Semitic names, or have received their Greek equivalents, Zeus, Herakles, Athene, Tyché, and so forth, but it is a Valens, a Caius, a Publius, a Lucilius, an Ulpius, who are inscribed as benefactors of the temples. It is Flavii, Bassi and Cornelii who are buried around them. Where two generations are named together, the name of the father is nearly always Semitic, the name of the son is very frequently Latin, and never Greek—a curious proof of the Latinising of the natives. 'Farewell, O Rufus, son of Ath! veteran, aged 75;'[1] 'of Valens, son of Azîz;'[2] 'Bassos, son of Zabd;'[3] 'Hadrian, son of Malekh.'[4] Seldom is this reversed, but we found a tombstone, near Sheikh Miskîn on the Hajj road, with the name 'Authos, son of Priscus.'[5] Sometimes it is a native of

Its Roman frame.

[1] *θάρσ(ε) Ῥοῦφέ Ἄθου οὐετρανὸς ἐτ(ῶν)οέ*, Wadd. 2039.

[2] Οὐαλεντος Ἀζιζου, Wadd. 2046.

[3] *βασσος* Ζαβδου, Wadd. 2070 i.

[4] At Khurbet el Araje, Wadd. 2196. *Ἀδριανου τοῦ καὶ Σοαίδου Μαλέχου ἐθνάρχου, στρατηγοῦ νομάδων τὸ μνημίον ἐτῶν λβ΄. Ἀδδος ἀδελφὸς ἐτῶν κή.* Contemporary with the Emperor Hadrian. Cf. 1982, 2070 l., 2079, 2174.

[5] Αὔθος Πρεισκου ἔτη? *Critical Review*, ii. (1892). On the road to El Merkez, a little way out of Sheikh Miskîn, there is a cairn which the slab with this inscription surmounts. The shepherds affirmed it to be the tomb of Sheikh Mohammad el 'Ajamy; cf. Schumacher, *Across Jordan*, p. 118, for a Sheikh el 'Ajamy, whose tomb is shown at El 'Ajamy on the Upper Yarmuk.

2 R

Germany or of Gaul, drafted here for service on the Arabian border, whose epitaph tells you how he died thinking of his fatherland : '. . . born (?) and a lover of his country, having come from Germany and died in the Agrippian troop, was taken back to his own.'[1]

The Roman roads.

It is, however, in her roads, and the records of her frontier, that there survives fullest proof of Rome's power. The Roman roads diverged from Damascus—one skirting Hermon to Cæsarea-Philippi; two crossing Gaulanitis to the Jordan bridges above and below the Lake of Galilee, one striking south through the Lejá to Boṣra, and perhaps one down the east of the Lejá to Kanatha. At right angles to these ran others, especially the Great Eastern road from Gadara to Edrei, Boṣra, Salcha, and thence boldly into the desert in the direction of the Persian Gulf.[2] 'The Raṣif, or Roman road in these lands, is twelve paces broad, and is divided by five rows of upright stones into three divisions of equal breadth, the two outer rows are bordered by a ditch more or less deep, according to the level.'[3] When we pass out on to the borders of the desert, we see how marvellous was the line of the Roman defence. In the border villages,

The Roman frontier.

or by the roads as they plunge into the waste towards Palmyra or the Euphrates, marked by rows of black stones, on some hillock with no view but the desert, you read the official marks of the Legions, and the rough *graffiti* which the soldiers scribbled through

[1] . . . *νετος καὶ φιλόπατρις ἀπὸ Γερμανίας ἀνέλθων καὶ ἐν εἴλῃ Ἀγριππιανῇ ἀποθανῶ(ν) εἰς τὰ ἴδια μεθηνέχθη*, Wadd. 2121.

[2] It is impossible to ascertain the exact dates of these. The roads through the Lejá may be as old as the conquest of the Lejá by Varro in 23 B.C. See p. 617, n. 6. The most of the milestones are of the Antonines.

[3] Wetzstein, *Reisebericht*, 73.

the tedium of their desert watch.[1] Even more conspicuous is the skill by which Rome won the nomads to her service and fastened them down in defence of the border they had otherwise fretted and broken. On chiefs of tribes were bestowed the titles Phylarch, Ethnarch, and Strategus of the Nomads.[2]

Behind this Roman bulwark there grew up a curious, a unique civilisation talking Greek, imitating Rome, but at heart Semitic. We have seen how overrun with Arabs Hauran was before Rome came, how her earliest civilisers were themselves Semites,—a Herod, a Philip, an Agrippa, 'three thousand Idumæans,' a colony of 'Babylonian Jews;' and we have seen how an Arab civilisation, the Nabatean, grew up to the south of Hauran. Nor did the Semitic influences upon Hauran cease when Rome made her frontiers secure to the east of it. The nomads continued to immigrate in even greater numbers than before, yet they came not to rob but to settle, and to add their own weight to the resistance which Rome offered to the tides of the desert. Of these immigrations the most distinguished was that of the Beni Jafn, who left Yemen in 104 A.D., and towards the close of the century settled within the borders of the Empire.[3] But there were many who came with and after the Beni Jafn, and the border garrisons seem to have been

The Semitic elements.

[1] At Namara, for instance, a good day's journey from the frontier villages of Hauran into the desert. Among the *graffiti* Θαῖμος Σίδμου and Γάδδος δρομεδάρι(ο)ς, Wadd. 2267 (on the dromedary troops, cf. Wadd. 1946, 2424): the names of the Second and Third Legions. *Id.* 2279, 2281.

[2] 'Phylarch,' Wadd. 2404, etc.; for 'Ethnarch,' 'Strategus of the nomads,' see inscription on p. 625, n. 4. ; also Wadd. 2112, at El Hit, where Waddington thinks he found evidence of the presence of an Augustan band, Acts xxvii. 1; the fragment is σπειρης Αυ. . . . Cf. Ewing, 70: Θεῷ Αὔμου; Wadd. 2441; Ewing, 88.

[3] See p. 9; cf. Wadd. 2110, 2413 n.

largely composed of Arab soldiers. The Greek and Latin elements of the population, as in other Oriental provinces, did not endure. Hauran must have remained essentially Semitic. The Greek of the inscriptions is Greek written by Semites: containing many blunders and barbarisms, and betraying the influence of the Semitic phonology.[1] We have seen that in the families which rose to the position of having an ornate tomb, or of being able to dedicate a temple, the name of the father was nearly always Semitic —a contrast to the monuments of the Decapolis, in which Semitic names are very infrequent. Again, in the temples of Hauran, the names of the gods are not altogether Greek, as in the Decapolis, but we meet with Baalsamîn, Du Sara, Athi, Aziz, Aumos, Allat, Vagrah, and the curious Theandrites. Herod's temple at Sia' is dedicated to Baalsamîn, Baal of the Heavens,[2] probably the Zeus Megistos Keraunios of the Greek inscriptions. Du Sara was a Sun-God, giver of fertility and joy, whom the Greeks identified with Dionysus.[3] His symbols, the vine and the wine-cup, still ornament some lintels in many of the villages of Hauran; the chief centres of his worship were Petra and El-Hejr in Central Arabia, but it is a proof of the distance to which Nabatean commerce extended that we find two tablets

The Nabatean deities.

[1] Wadd. 2081, *σεννοτου* שנת: 2090, *πόντων πάντων*: cf. 1916, 2049-53, etc.

[2] בעשמין contracted from בעלשמין, *C.I.S.*, Pars II. tom. I. No. 163.

[3] In Nabatean, דושרא, *C.I.S.*, Pars II. tom. I. No. 157 at Puteoli; 160 at Rome; 190 Umm el Jemal, south of Boṣra, frequently in the monuments of El-Hejr, 197 ff. In Greek *Δουσαρης*, Wadd. 2023; 2312 with the epithet *ἀνίκητος*, also applied to *Ἥλιος* in 2392. Cf. the proper name *Δουσαριος*, 1916. Epiphanius (*Haeres.*) describes the feast at Petra at the winter solstice in honour of Du Sara and his virgin mother. See also Tertullian, *Apolog.* 24. In *Z.D.M.G.* xiv. 465, the name is derived from Sheraa, a chain of mountains in Arabia, as if 'Lord of Shera.' Cf. Baethgen, *Beiträge zur Semitischen Religionsgeschichte*, pp. 94-97.

dedicated to him at Rome and Puteoli. Allat was 'the mother of the gods, the goddess of Salkhat,' which city was specially sacred to her.[1] Aziz, the Mighty, Athi and Aumos were deities of lower rank.[2] The Greek name of Theandrios or Theandrites is as puzzling as it is interesting: the Semitic original is unknown.[3]

The architecture of Hauran.

In the architecture of Hauran native elements are no less conspicuous. We have no more the mere imitations of the great Greek orders which we found in the Decapolis; but the lines and the ornaments of building are determined both by the habits of Oriental art and by the nature of the peculiar material with which Hauran architects had to work. The oldest building of all, the temple at Sia',[4] was erected by Herod, a prince already under the influence of Hellenic culture; but its unmistakable Greek lines are strongly modified by Eastern ideas.[5] De Vogüé thinks that in its ruins we can see some reflection of the plan of the temple at Jerusalem, which was not only contemporary but likewise

[1] *C.I.S.*, Pars II. tom. I. Nos. 170, 171, 182, 183, 185; 182 runs: 'this is the house which Ruhu, son of Malkhu, son of Akhlibu, son of Ruhu, built to Allat, their goddess (אלהתהם, a contradiction of Renan's theory that the expression 'goddess' was impossible in Semitic). In 185 Allat is associated with Vagrah. Cf. Baethgen, *Beiträge*, etc., 98, 99.

[2] Aziz, Wadd. 2314 (Suweida), identified on an inscription in Dacia with Apollo; Athi on an inscription at Egla (El Ageilat) Batanea, Wadd. 2209; Θεῷ αὐτῶν 'Εθάῳ worshipped at Palmyra under the name עתי. To Αὔμος are inscriptions at Deir el Leben, Wadd. 2392, 2394, on a large temple of 320 A.D., on the latter of which he seems identified with the Sun. Cf. 2463 and 2464 (Hauran in Trachonitis), on the latter of which the name Aumos belongs to a Christian man.

[3] Θεάνδριος, Wadd. 1905; Θεανδρίτης, 2046, 2481.

[4] See p. 618.

[5] On the principles of the architecture of Hauran, the chief authority is De Vogüé, *Syrie Centrale, Architecture Civile et Religieuse*; see especially, for the information which forms the basis of the above paragraphs, the *Avant Propos* of this excellent work.

the work of Herod. It was, however, the peculiarity of their building materials which chiefly influenced the ancient architects of Hauran. Their country, as we have seen, was practically treeless; they had to construct entirely of stone, and the basalt which was at their disposal not only served for masonry, but allowed itself to be cut into beams, slabs, lattice-work, and other shapes for which wood was usually employed. Consequently the building of Hauran developed a style of its own. This took the form of a series of parallel arches, across which were laid long beams or rafters of basalt,[1] and again on these the slabs of the ceiling. Some of these roofs are still solid; above the rafters of others there are scattered a number of big stones, so that you have a trellis roof through which the sunshine is fretted on the floor beneath.[2] But frequently the roof took the form of the cupola, and in this you see the 'first essays towards the Byzantine style of architecture, and especially towards putting the cupola on a square by means of spherical pendentives.'[3] The parallel arches, straining outwards, required some exterior bulwark; and, consequently, along many of the public buildings of Hauran you find solid buttresses running the entire length of the walls, and built in the form of steps and stairs. They are the favourite benches of the village school, when the sun is not too fierce; the bright children, scattered over these ancient buttresses, compose a charming picture. The elevation of the buildings is generally low, but never

Its originality.

[1] De Vogüé describes the slabs as laid directly on the arches, but in the specimens I examined the long basalt beams intervene.

[2] As in the Menzil at Es-Sunamein and elsewhere.

[3] De Vogüé as above. The oldest extant specimen of the cupola is Umm ez Zeitun, and it dates from 282 A.D.

mean; the decorations few and simple. The basalt allowed less carving than the limestone of Gilead, but it has preserved the inscriptions better. It is a wonder to see the carved stone lattices of the windows, and the great stone doors turning on their stone hinges.

Most of the public buildings appear to have risen in the times of the Antonines and of Septimius Severus,—Temples, Basilicas, Theatres, and also those round towers, which all civilisations have found indispensable in warfare with the Arabs.[1]

But there had entered Hauran a new force, which was gradually to change both the religion and the art of the land.

Early Christianity in Hauran.

The early course of Christianity across Jordan is extremely obscure. In Western and Northern Syria, in Mesopotamia, and in Persia, we have comparatively full accounts of the organisation of the Church, but in Eastern Syria and Arabia her early history is almost a blank. We know of our Lord's ministry in Decapolis and Peræa,[2] and of Paul's conversion and the little band of disciples at Damascus,[3] and of Paul's possible ministry in Arabia.[4] The Christians of Jerusalem fled from the siege to Pella,[5] where it is said that the Ebionite heresy first developed,[6] and the Christianity of Eastern Palestine is described more than once as of this Judaistic kind—enforcing the Mosaic law, affirming the human birth of Christ, abjuring

[1] Cf. Uzziah's use of towers, 2 Chron. xxvi. 9, 10; and that of the Turks to-day along the Hajj road. Doughty, *Arabia Deserta*, i. *passim*.

[2] Mark v. 1 and x. 1.

[3] Acts ix.; 2 Cor. xi.

[4] Gal. i. 15-17: *But when it was the good pleasure of God . . . to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach him among the Gentiles . . . I went away into Arabia, and again I returned unto Damascus.*

[5] Eusebius, *H.E.* iii. 5. There are no remains of this date.

[6] Epiphanius, *adv. Hæres.* xxx. 2.

Paul as a heretic, and looking for the return of Christ to found an earthly kingdom.[1] But of all this there are no remains, not even at Pella, and the earliest record we have of an active Christianity in Hauran is of the establishment of a monastery in 180 A.D. by 'Amr I., a Ghassanide prince. About 218 A.D. Origen paid two visits to the east of Jordan; the first on the call of the Governor of Arabia to explain to him his doctrine,[2] and the second to an Arabian Synod, at which he overthrew the heresy of Beryllus, the Bishop of Boṣra, and propounded the eternal generation of the Son.[3] From Schuhba in Trachonitis came the first Christian emperor. Philip, the Arabian, was the son of a Bedawee chief, was at least a nominal Christian, and occupied the Imperial throne from 244 to 249.[4] The Christians of these regions must have suffered, like those of the rest of Syria, in the persecutions under Decius and Diocletian,[5] and it is perhaps owing to the latter emperor's order for the destruction of all Christian buildings that we have so very few Christian remains earlier than his day. Traces of these great persecutions are still eloquent in Hauran—one cryptogram for Christ, the ΙΧΘΥΣ of the catacombs;[6] another, ΧΜΓ, found only here, and probably meaning,

Origen and the Synod of Boṣra.

The persecutions and Martyrs.

[1] East of the Dead Sea were gathered the sect of the Elkesaites—another heretical sect, taking their name from חיל כסי, their title for the Holy Ghost, which was also given to their sacred book. They practised many Mosaic and Essene rites, and worshipped Christ as the Son of God; Epiphanius, *Hær.* xix., xxx., liii.; Eusebius, *H.E.* vi. 38; Theodoret, *Fabularum Hæreticarum*, vii.

[2] Eusebius, *H.E.* vi. 19.

[3] *Ibid.* vi. 20, 33, 37.

[4] *Ibid.* vi. 34; cf. Uhlhorn, Herz. *Real Encyc.* xi. pp. 613 ff.; cf. Wadd. 2071 ff.

[5] Decius, 249-251 A.D.; Diocletian began persecution in 303.

[6] Wadd. 2362. Wadd. 2465, Ew. 82, has the monogram ☧.

'Christ born of Mary;'[1] a possible allusion to Mary herself, masked in heathen terms, *Πότνια Νύμφη*;[2] above all, many bits of basalt with the words, or syllables of the words, Martyr and Martyrs' Monument.[3] These latter meet you in almost every village, rendering its very dust dear to your Christian heart. Even the nomads raised monuments to the martyrs.[4] One longer inscription runs: 'For the Repose of the Martyrs who have fallen asleep;'[5] it reminds us of Stephen. The erection of such memorials proves a day in which Christianity was able to show itself in public, and there are others that record its gradual triumph over paganism. Amid the names of Zeus, Athene, Du Sara, Allât, which still stamp the ruins, you read that of our Lord carven with equal boldness in the face of the sun, as thus—

Triumph of Christ.

ΙΗΣ ✠ ΟΥΣ

or a proclamation of the 'One God;'[6] or the triumphant words—[7]

+ΧΡΙΣ+ΤΟΣ ΝΙΚΑ+

On these follow longer inscriptions: prayers, dedications, quotations from Scripture, epitaphs. At Umm el Jemal: 'Prayer of Numerianus (and) John—From the womb of (our) mother our God art thou; forsake us not.'[8] At Salkhat, in wretched Greek, scribbled in an obscure chamber, 'Aouos, Moses, for the forgiveness of sins.'[9] In

[1] *Χρίστος ἐκ Μάριας γεννηθεῖς*, Wadd. 1936, 2145.

[2] Wadd. 2145.

[3] *Μαρτύριον*. As these 'martyries' were used as chapels, and many churches contained martyries, the words *ἐκκλησία* and *μαρτύριον* are sometimes used by early ecclesiastical writers as equivalent.

[4] *e.g.* Wadd. 2464, where the *Μαρτύριον* was raised by a Phylarch.

[5] *Ὑπὲρ τῆς ἀναπαυσέως τῶν κεκοιμένων Μαρτύρων*, Wadd. 1920.

[6] Εἰς Θ . . Wadd. 2057, cf. 2066.

[7] Wadd. 2253.

[8] Ps. xxi. 11; Wadd. 2068.

[9] Wadd. 2010.

several places, 'Help, O Christ.' On the lintel of a house at Tuffas: 'Jesus Christ be the shelter and defence of all the family of the house, and bless their incoming and their outgoing.'[1] Sometimes the intercession of the saints is sought, as at Sahwet El Khudr, in the Chapel of St. George: 'Holy George, receive: also Scholasticius, the offerer, do thou guard by thy prayers, and for Comes, his brother, ask repose.'[2] It is remarkable that the quotations from Scripture are from the Old Testament in the LXX. version, but sometimes, as in the prayer quoted, they are adapted for application to Christ. 'This is the gate of the Lord, the righteous shall come in by it.'[3] 'If the Lord watch not the city, in vain doth the watchman keep awake.'[4] On the portal of the Church of St. John, now the Great Mosque in Damascus: 'Thy kingdom, O Christ, is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth from generation to generation.'[5]

Contrast of Pagan and Christian inscriptions.

Pagan and Christian inscriptions contrast in two important respects. The Pagans parade in every case the names of the donors, offerers and dedicators. With a modesty, too strange to the liberality of the modern Church, the Christian inscriptions of Hauran nearly always omit the names, as thus: 'Remember, Lord, the founder, of whom Thou knowest the name.'[6] Another, but less clear, contrast is found

[1] As I copied it, the inscription reads a little differently (see *Critical Review*, ii. p. 60) from Schumacher's copy, *Across the Jordan*, p. 21. The quotations are from the Psalms: Ps. iii. 4; cxxi. Cf. Wadd. 2068, 2537.

[2] Wadd. 1981, cf. 2126.

[3] Ps. cxviii. 20; Wadd. 1961.

[4] Ps. cxxvii. 6; Wadd. 2390, cf. 2501.

[5] The unused portal above the roof of the silversmiths' bazaar. The verse is from Psalm cxlv.

[6] Wadd. 2087, etc. Cf. the inscription on the font at Bethlehem. But see 2249 for an instance of the name being given.

among the tombs. The heathen epitaphs, whether in Decapolis or Hauran, are mostly without hope. The Romans, in lawyer-like form, record only the name, the rank, the age of the dead, and how the tomb was built.[1] The Greeks indulge in sentiment and reflection; their hope is very ambiguous. 'After all things a tomb' is inscribed on the lintel of a tomb at Irbid.[2] *Καὶ Σύ*, Even thou, is a common *memento mori*. The Greek heart breaks on the stone; the farewell seems final. 'Thou hast finished' is a common epitaph. 'Titus, son of Malchus, farewell, thou hast finished untimely, (thy) years twelve, farewell!'[3] Or the dead are told that theirs is the inevitable fate, there is nobody deathless. 'Be of cheer, Helen, dear child, no one is deathless. I have laid thee beside thy mother, Gavaia. . . .'[4] This *οὐδείς ἀθάνατος* is very common. Perhaps its most striking appearance is on a tomb on the Mount of Olives, over against the Church of the Resurrection.[5] It even occurs on Christian tombs, and indeed upon the latter there is neither exultation expressed, nor the vision of another life. Yet a quiet confidence reigns. The dead are spoken of as 'they that sleep;' the living pray for their repose, or offer

Epitaphs.

[1] See the inscription we discovered at Gadara, p. 461 of this volume.

[2] Merrill (*East of Jordan*, 293) reads Μετὰ Πάντα Τ(οῦτο); Clermont-Ganneau (*Recueil*, etc., 17) reads Τ(άφος). The latter is correct; my copy shows *a* as the second letter of the word; but see Additional Notes to Fourth Edition.

[3] On a pillar now in a stable in Gadara. *Critical Review*, ii. 61; cf. Clermont-Ganneau, *Recueil*, p. 21. But see Additional Notes to Fourth Edition.

[4] Wadd. 2032, cf. 1986; *ἐπαύσετο Αἶθος*. But 2247 (*ἅμα θεοῖς*) and 2322 express hope. Cf. also 2432, Ewing, 112.

[5] Wadd. 1897, cf. 2429. There is a beautiful epitaph given by Wadd. 2322:

Ὕπνος ἔχει σε, μάκαρ, πολυήρατε, δῖε Σαβῖνε
καὶ ζῇς ὡς ἥρως καὶ νέκυς οὐκ ἐγένου.
εὕδεις δ' ὡς ἔτι ζῶν ὑπὸ δένδρεσι σοῖς ἐν τύμ(βοις)
ψυχαὶ γὰρ ζῶσιν τῶν ἄγαν εὐσεβαίων.

a prayer for themselves, as: 'May the soul of Gerontius be saved.'[1]

Other notable expressions of faith and feeling are: 'O Christ, our God;' 'The Peace of Christ be to all;' 'Peace be to all men + the Holy Catholic Church of the Lord.'[2]

The Church of Eastern Palestine was organised in the second and third centuries, for in the beginning of the fourth its bishops and metropolitans were many, as is witnessed by the Acts of the Councils of Nice and Chalcedon. At the former Damascus had a metropolitan with seven suffragans. Bosra was the ecclesiastical, as well as the civil, metropolis of Hauran. The diocese had its own theology, as we have seen, in Origen's time, and its synods. The town was a great centre of trade, only second in importance to Damascus —a tradition preserved in its present name of Old Damascus. It was full of monks.

Dioceses of the Church.

The buildings of the earliest Christianity were destroyed, as we have seen, under Diocletian. They were probably the martyries, little chapels built over a martyr's grave. After the victory over paganism the first churches were the basilicas of the Antonines and other emperors, and then imitations of these. But during the fourth and fifth centuries there developed the style known as Byzantine,—the dome above the square chamber. The two finest churches were that of St. George at Zorava, of date 514,[3] and the cathedral at Bosra of 512. St. George's Church consists

Churches and other buildings.

[1] Wadd. 2492. [2] Wadd. 2500, 2061, 2519.

[3] Probably on site of a temple to Theandrites, Wadd. 2569. The relics of St. George appear to have been taken to Zorava in the beginning of the 6th century, Wadd. 2498.

of two concentric octagons in a square that is crowned by drum and cupola ; against the eastern face of the exterior octagon is built the choir, terminating in an apse ; each angle of the square outside the octagons holds a smaller apse ; on the west side there are three portals ; on the north and south one each. It is this church which bears the famous inscription beginning, 'The assembly of demons has become the house of the Lord.' The cathedral of Boṣra was four-square and crowned by a dome, with a longish apse to the east. An inscription in Boṣra[1] gives a form of the Greek original of church, *κυριακόν*, 'The Lord's house,' *κυρικόν*, which is as nearly as possible the same as the forms used at the other end of Christendom, *kerk* and *kirk*.

Overthrow of Christianity.

The latest Christian buildings in Hauran are of the middle of the seventh century. In the beginning of that century the camel-driver, Mohammed, used, on his journeys from Arabia, to visit Boṣra, and it is said that he learned there, from the monk Hariri, all he ever knew of Christianity.[2] Mohammed died in 632. By 634 the hosts whom his doctrines inspired had overrun Hauran, defeated on the Yarmuk the Christian army, and by 635 they had taken Damascus. Subsequent to this we have only two Christian buildings in Hauran, the monastery at Deir Eyoub, with the date 641,[3] and a church of St. George at El-Kufr, 652.[4] The Christianity and the Hellenism of the province rapidly dwindled to the merest fragments of their former selves.[5] The vitality

[1] Wadd. 1920.
[2] *Yakut* i. 64 ; the *Marâsid* i. 425, 441.
[3] Wadd. 2413.
[4] Ew. 153, 665 A.D. in Wadd. 1997.
[5] Ewing, 150, seems to describe the building of a church at El-Kufr in 720.

of Hauran was blasted. We have no buildings worthy of the name from the Mohammedan period ; the structures of former days were mutilated and abused ; the theatre at Boṣra was made a castle ; the cathedrals and churches were turned to mosques. Other barbarians have understood, interpreted, developed the civilisations which they conquered, and so did the Arabs themselves in other parts of the world. But in the desert-bordering Hauran, on which ruder and ruder swarms beat up as the centuries went on, there was only abuse, neglect, decay ; and the sole conservative elements, which have ensured that at least we should have some ruins of the ancient days, have been, on the one side, the hardness and weight of the Hauran basalt, and, on the other side, the stupid and superstitious reverence of the Arabs for inscriptions, which they have treasured and employed—generally on end, or wrong-side up,—as tombstones, and as charms over the doors of their houses. Hauran has continued fertile and full of villages down to the present day, but the villages have known no security, have sheltered no stable populations ; and the land has been scoured by nomads.[1] The great towns have become shells in which little clans huddle for shelter. In Boṣra to-day there are not more than forty families.

The Crusaders made two expeditions to Boṣra ; and they besieged Damascus. But none of these adventures effected anything, and though their coins have been found in Hauran, they got no settlement there.[2]

[1] See pp. 526-529.

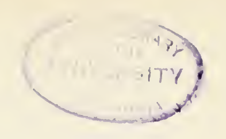
[2] On the Crusaders over Jordan, see p. 537.

CHAPTER XXX

DAMASCUS



For this Chapter consult Maps I. and II.



DAMASCUS

DAMASCUS—never claimed for Israel and never under a Hebrew prince[1]—lies beyond the limits of the Holy Land, and therefore of our present survey. But she has always been the goal of all the roads of the lands we have traversed, the dream and envy of their peoples. We have met her fame everywhere. She has seen the rise, felt the effect, and survived the passage of all the forces which have strewn Syria with ruins. There is not a fallen city we have visited but Damascus was old when it was built, and still flourishes long after it has perished. Amid the growth and decay of the races, civilisations and religions, which have thronged Syria for four thousand years, Damascus has remained the one perennially great Syrian city. Before we cease our survey, therefore, she demands our homage, with such appreciation as we may attempt of the secret of her eternal youth. Beyond appreciation we need not go: we have already recorded the main facts of her history.[2]

Damascus lies about seventy miles from the sea-board, upon the east of Anti-Lebanon, and close in to the foot

[1] For an apparent exception see p. 582.

[2] For her roads to the sea, her place between the Mediterranean and the far East, see chap. xx. ; for her connection with Israel, chap. xxvii. ; for her relations to Eastern Palestine, chap. xxv. ; for her place in the Decapolis, chap. xxviii. ; for her history under Rome and the Nabateans, chap. xxix.

of the hills. You reach her from Beyrout by a strong carriage-road which first climbs over Lebanon into 'Hollow Syria,' and then by the easy passes of Anti-Lebanon crosses into the valley of the Abana, with which it issues upon a great plain 2300 feet above the sea, and in extent thirty miles by ten. This plain is bounded on the west by Hermon, on the north by a low eastern offshoot of Anti-Lebanon, on the east by a row of extinct volcanoes, on the south by the river Awaj, probably the Pharpar, and by another low range of hills that shuts off Hauran.

Situation of Damascus.

Like the slopes of Anti-Lebanon behind it, this plain would be as desert as all the rest of the country to the Euphrates were it not for the river Abana. The Abana bursts full born from the heart of Anti-Lebanon, runs a course of ten miles in a narrow gorge, and from the mouth of this flings itself abroad in seven streams. After watering the greater part of the plain, it dies away in a large marsh. Over the green of this marsh you see from Damascus at sunset low purple hills twenty-five miles off. They are the edge of the Eastern desert: beyond them there is nothing but a rolling waste, and the long ways to Palmyra and Baghdad.

The Abana.

It is an astonishing site for what is said to be the oldest, and is certainly the most enduring, city of the world. For it is utterly incapable of defence; it is remote from the sea and the great natural lines of commerce. From the coast of Syria it is doubly barred by those ranges of snow-capped mountains whose populations enjoy more tempting prospects to the north and west. But look east and you understand Damascus.

The haven of the desert.

You would as soon think of questioning the site of New York or of Sydney or of San Francisco. Damascus is a great harbour of refuge upon the earliest sea man ever learned to navigate. It is because there is nothing but desert beyond, or immediately behind this site ; because this river, the Abana, instead of wasting her waters on a slight extension of the fringe of fertile Syria, saves them in her narrow gorge till she can fling them well out upon the desert, and there, instead of slowly expending them on the doubtful possibilities of a province, lavishes all her life at once in the creation of a single great city, and straightway dies in face of the desert—it is because of all this that Damascus, so remote and so defenceless, has endured throughout human history, and must endure. Nineveh, Babylon and Memphis easily conquered her—she probably preceded them, and she has outlived them. She has been twice supplanted—by Antioch, and she has seen Antioch decay, by Baghdad, and Baghdad is forgotten. She has been many times sacked, and twice at least the effective classes of her population have been swept into captivity, but this has not broken the chain of her history. She was once capital of the world from the Atlantic to the Bay of Bengal,[1] but the vast empire went from her and the city continued to flourish as before. Standing on the utmost edge of fertility, on the shore of the much-voyaged desert, Damascus is indispensable alike to civilisation and to the nomads. Moreover, she is the city of the Mediterranean world, which lies nearest to the far East, and Islam has made her the western port for Mecca.

The plain on which Damascus lies is called the Ghutah.

[1] Under the Omeiyade Khalifs in the end of the seventh century.

Too high to be marshy, the Ghutah is shot all over by the cold, rapid waters of the Abana, which do an equal service in bringing life, and in carrying away corruption. Verdure springs profusely everywhere. As you look down from one of the bare heights to the north you see some hundred and fifty square miles of green—thronging and billowy as the sea, with the white compact city rising from it like an island. There is apparently all the lavishness of a virgin forest, but when you get down among it you find neither rankness nor jungle. The cultivated ground is extensive, most of it in orchards and plantations, but there are also flower gardens, parks and corn-fields of considerable size—none, however, so spread as to disturb the distant impression of close forest.

The Ghutah.

It is best to enter Damascus in summer, because then everything predisposes you for her charms. You come down off the most barren flanks of Anti-Lebanon. You cross the plateau of Sahra-ed-Dimas, six shadeless miles that stretch themselves, with the elasticity of all Syrian plains in haze, till you almost fancy you are upon some enchanted ground rolling out with you as you travel. But at last the road begins to sink, and you come with it into a deep rut, into which all the heat and glare of the broad miles behind seems to be compressed. The air is still, the rocks blistered, the road deep in dust, when suddenly a bank of foliage bursts into view, with a white verandah above it. The road turns a corner; you are in shadow, on a bridge, in a breeze. Another turn and you have streams on both sides, a burn gurgling through bushes on the left, on the right not one stream but one banked over the other, and the wind in the poplars above. You break into the

The approach to Damascus.

richer valley of the Abana itself. You pass between orchards of figs and orchards of apricots. For hedges there are the briar rose, and for a canopy the walnut. Pomegranate blossoms glow through the shade; vine-boughs trail across the briar; a little waterfall breaks on the edge of the road. To the left the river, thirty feet of dark green water with white curls upon it, shoots down a steep, smooth bed. And all this water and leafage are so lavish that the broken mud-walls and slovenly houses have no power to vex the eye, exulting in the contrast of the valley with the bare brown hills that shut it in. For two miles more you ride between trees, through a village, over a bridge, between high banks of gardens—road and river together, flecked with light. You come between two streams, one washing the roots of aged fig-trees, past a quarry where the desert sinks in cliff upon the road, beside an old aqueduct whose Roman masonry trails with brambles. The gorge narrows, there is room only for the aqueduct and river, with the road between, but just as the cliff comes near enough to overhang the road the hills turn sharply away, and the relieved river slackens and sprawls between islands. We are out on the plain; there are gardens and meadows; men and boys, horses, asses and geese loaf upon the grass and the shingle; great orchards, with many busy people gathering apricots, stretch on either side. Still, there is no city visible. A mile more of orchards, then through the walnuts a crescent gleams, and the minaret it crowns. You come out on a grassy level, cut by the river into two parks. There is a five-arched bridge across it, and over the bridge minarets and low white domes. You pass some public gardens, cross the river, ride between it and

The gorge of the Abana.

another garden with lofty trees, and halt in a great square, with the serai, the courts of justice, the prison, and the barracks of the principal garrison of Syria. The river has disappeared under the square by three tunnels, from which it passes in lesser conduits and pipes to every house and court in the city. By the northern walls a branch breaks again into the open ; here the chiefest gardens are spread beneath walnuts and poplars, and the water rushes by them swift and cold from its confinement.

With the long gardens of Damascus, the paradise of the Arab world, you must take the Bazaars of Damascus, in which many other worlds meet the Arab. Travellers, it is true, are often disappointed with both gardens and bazaars. It is not to be expected that we Westerns should feel the charm of the waters of Damascus as the desert Bedawee does. But if any one confesses the bazaars dull, he has neither eye for colour nor wit to read the city's destiny in the faces she has gathered to them from Nubia to the Caucasus. It is a perpetual banquet of colour. There are blots upon it—Manchester prints, cheap Paris clocks, second-hand carriages from Beyrout, the dusty streets themselves, where they break into the open glare. But in the long dusk tunnels, shot by solid shafts of light, all else is beautiful—the old walnut-wood, the brown tobacco bales, the carpets, the spotted brown scones in the bakers' shops, the tawny sweetmeats, the golden Hauran wheat, the piles of green melons, the tables of snow from Hermon, the armour and rich saddle-bags, the human dresses, but especially the human flesh—the pallid townsman, the mahogany fellah, the Druze with mountain blood in his cheek, the grey Jew, the black and blue-black negroes. Besides Turk and

The bazaars of Damascus.

Hebrew, the great racial types are three: the Bedawee Arab, the Greek, and the Kurd. They are the token of how Damascus lies between the Desert, the Levant, and that other region of the world to which we are so apt to forget that Syria has any avenue—the highlands of Armenia. Saladin, her greatest Sultan, was a Kurd: the Kurd sheep-masters every year send their flocks for sale to the Lebanons, and Kurdish cavalry have always formed the most vigorous part of the Damascus garrison.

But even the Bazaars of Damascus fail to exhaust the significance of the city. To gather more of this you must come out upon the three great roads which go forth from her—west, south, and east. The western, or south-western, road travels by Galilee to the Levant and the Nile. The southern, which leaves the city by the 'Gates of God,' takes the pilgrims to Mecca. The eastern is the road to Baghdad. Egypt, Arabia, Persia,—this city of the Khalifs lies in the midst of the three, and the Mediterranean is behind her.

The three great roads.

As for her relations to Syria, Damascus never had in these but one rival, and this only so long as a European power ruled in the East. Antioch was the creation of the Greeks (330 B.C.), the capital of the Seleucid dynasty, the residence of the Roman Legate in Syria, and the centre of Eastern Christianity. During the thousand years of European supremacy Damascus fell second to Antioch, and her history is obscure. But so soon as the Moslem came (they took Damascus in 634, Antioch in 635), the city on the Desert rose again to the first rank, the city on the Levant began to decline. For one hundred years, 650 to 750, Damascus had the Khalifate under the Omayades; and once for all she was

Damascus and Antioch.

bound to Mecca itself by the Hajj. Under Arab rule Damascus has even absorbed the Christian fame of Antioch, for though the Patriarch still takes his title from Antioch, he resides in Damascus. The fortunes of the two cities during the Crusades reflect the same relations. The European forces made Antioch their centre, but they never took Damascus.

Religious significance of Damascus.

In the history of religion, Damascus was the stage of two great crises. She was the scene of the conversion of the first apostle of Christianity to the Gentiles: she was the first Christian city to be taken by Islam. It was fit that Paul's conversion, with his first sense of a mission to the Gentiles, should not take place till his journey had brought him to Gentile soil. The great cathedral, which rose on the ruins of the heathen temple, was dedicated not to Paul but to John the Baptist. When the Moslem took Damascus in 634 this Church was divided between Mohammedans and Christians. Seventy years later it was absorbed by the conquerors, and was rebuilt to become one of the greatest, if not the richest, of the mosques of Islam. The rebuilding destroyed all the Christian features, except that which, still above the south portal, preserves this prayer and prophecy: *Thy kingdom, O Christ, is an everlasting kingdom, and Thy dominion endureth for all generations.*

APPENDICES

I. Some Geographical Passages and Terms of the Old Testament.

II. Stade's Theory of Israel's Invasion of Western Palestine.

III. The Wars against Sihon and Og.

IV. The Bibliography of Eastern Palestine.

V. Roads and Wheeled Vehicles in Syria.



APPENDIX I

SOME GEOGRAPHICAL PASSAGES AND TERMS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Reference is made on p. 52 to several passages in the Old Testament which catalogue the chief physical features of Palestine.

(*a*) The earliest of these seems to be Judges i. 9. Looking west from the hills above Jericho the writer describes the tribe of Judah as *going down to fight the Canaanites who dwelt on the Mount, the Negeb, and the Shephelah.* In his masterly examination of the Book of Judges, Budde (*Bücher Richter u. Samuel*) argues that this verse does not belong to the original Jahvist narrative on the ground that it contradicts ver. 19, *Judah possessed the Mount, but could not drive out the inhabitants of the Valley, because they had chariots of iron.* But, in the first place, ver. 9 only says that Judah went down to attack the Canaanites in the Mount, the Negeb, and the Shephelah, while ver. 19 deals with the result of that attack, viz., that it was successful only so far as the mountainous territory was concerned. Secondly, Budde seems to take Shephelah and 'Emeḳ or Valley as the same thing. But Shephelah is the name of a well-defined region, the low hills between Philistia and the Judæan range, and including both hill and vale. 'Emeḳ, on the other hand, is a ḳind of land—valley or plain-land, as distinct from hilly country. I see no reason, therefore, for separating ver. 9 from the section in which it occurs. Note, too, that it is said Judah *went down* to the Mount, etc., which can only mean that in the mind of the writer this tribe did not depart on its separate path of conquest from the rest of Israel till after Israel had reached the crest of the Central Range.

The rest of the passages form a group in which it is possible to identify one hand, or, at least, one style, that of the Deuteronomist.

(*b*) In Deut. i. 7 Israel are ordered to take their journey to the *Mount of the Amorite*, that is, the Central Range, as representative of the whole land, *and to all his neighbours.* Then the main features of the country are given as from the Jordan westward—*in the 'Arabah*, or Jordan Valley, *in the Mount*, or the Central Range itself, *in the Shephelah, in the Negeb, and on the Coast of the Sea—the land of the Canaanite. Lebanon* is then added, and all the country north to the *great river, the river Euphrates*, for that was the ideal border of the Promised Land.

(*c*) In Josh. x. 40 *all the Land*, as far as it was conquered by Joshua, and therefore exclusive of the Maritime Plain, is defined as *The Mount, and the Negeb, and the Shephelah, and the Slopes* (Eng. Ver., *springs*).

(*d*.) In Josh. xi. 16 this is given more fully as *the Mount, and all the Negeb, and all the Land of Goshen*—an unknown quantity extending from Gibeon (Josh. x. 41; cf. xv. 51) southwards across Judah, and out upon the Negeb, and to be distinguished from that land of Goshen where Israel was settled in Egypt—*and the Shephelah, and the 'Arabah, and the Mount of Israel*—that is, the Central Range within the limits of the northern kingdom of Israel—*and its Shephelah*, probably the district of lower and more open hills between the hills of Samaria and Carmel, which present so many resemblances to *the* Shephelah opposite Judah. No other interpretation seems feasible; but, if it be correct, then the date of the passage can only be after the kingdom of Israel was separated from Judah.

(*e*) In Josh. xii. 8 we find *The Mountain, the Shephelah, the 'Arabah, the Slopes, the Desert*—on the skirts of the land—*and the Negeb.* The Mountain or Central Range was named in its various portions. *The Mountain*—English version, *hill-country*—*of Judah* or *Judæa*,[1] *the Mountain of Ephraim*,[2] or (as we have seen) *of Israel*, or, in the plural, *the Mountains of Samaria*, for the range is scattered here; and in Galilee, *the Mountain of Naphtali.*

[1] Luke. [2] Authorised Version, *Mount Ephraim.*

All these refer to Western Palestine. The divisions and names of Eastern Palestine are given in chap. xxv. As in the west, we have *mount* applied to the hills of Moab; *mountains of 'Abarim*, to Gilead and to Bashan. There is, besides, Mishôr, applied to the level plateau of Moab (Siegfried-Stade, *Handwörterbuch*, refer it in 1 Chron. xxvi. 10 to the Jordan Valley, but incorrectly).

A few more words are necessary on some of the geographical terms of the Old Testament. For HILLS or HEIGHTS the Hebrews had the following words: הר Hâr, applied either, as we have seen, to a whole range, or hill-country (in this case also used in the plural), or to a single great hill like Hor (Num. xx. 22), or to smaller hills like the citadel of Jerusalem (Isa. xxii. 5) or Samaria. LXX., mostly ὄρος and ὀρεινή. גבעה Gibe'ah, is '*hill*,' properly as distinguished from *mountain* הר, but also interchangeable sometimes with the latter, Isa. xl. 4; Job xv. 7; Prov. viii. 25. Like הר of Mount Zion, Isa. x. 32; Ezek. xxxiv. 26. But it is never like הר used of a mountain range or hill-country. On the other hand, in Song of Solomon iv. 6, it may be used of an artificial *high place*. LXX. nearly uniformly βουνός.

במה Bamah, on the other hand, is in the singular used only of artificial high places; but once or twice in the plural is meant to be natural heights (*e.g.* Micah i. 3; Jer. xxvi. 18; Ezek. xxxvi. 2; cf. 2 Sam. i. 19, 25).

עֹפֶל 'Ophel=swell, bank, or mound; as a common noun it is used only for tumours on the body (cf. *tumulus*, from *tumeo*); as a name with the article (except Isa. xxxii. 14; Micah iv. 8) it was given to the rising ground south-east of the Temple, cf. 2 Kings v. 24; Neh. iii. 26, etc.; also to a part of Samaria, 2 Kings v. 24; also to a part of Dibon, on line 22 of the Moabite Stone.

אֲשֵׁדוֹת Ashēdoth, as we have seen, are certainly slopes; and so with כְּסָלוֹת as in כ״ תבור, Josh xix. 12; cf. Josh. xix. 18, Modern Iksal. צַד Ṣadh = side, 1 Sam. xxiii. 26; 2 Sam. xiii. 34; יָרֵךְ Jarcah=thigh, Judges xix. i. 18, etc.; צֵלָע Ṣel'a = rib, 2 Sam.

xvi. 13; שְׁכֶם Shechem=back, Gen. xlviii. 22, כָּתֵף Chatheph=shoulder, Josh. xv. 8, 10; xviii. 10, of hills, but also to the sea coast of Philistia as rising from the sea, Isa. xi. 14; ראשׁ Rôsh, Arabic, Râs=headland, foreland, or summit; and even אָזְנוֹת 'Aznoth=ears; אזנות תבור Josh. xix. 34, though it is impossible to say to what exactly this refers. קֶרֶן Keren=horn.

שְׁפִי Shephî is a bare hill; נָפָה Naphah is elevation, raised land, only in Naphath Dor, the rise of Carmel behind Dor; תֵּל Tel (in composition Tell=Arabic, Tell) is the mound composed of rubbish on which a village often stands, Josh. xi. 13; Jer. xxx. 18; also the heap caused by the overthrow of a city, Deut. xiii. 17, etc. As a place-name, it does not seem to have occurred in ancient Palestine. The only instances of it in the Old Testament refer to Babylonia, Ezek. iii. 15; Ezra ii. 59; Neh. vii. 61. Other words for a height (geographical) are מָרוֹם Marôm (cf. רוּמָה Rûmah, a place-name, 2 Kings xxiii. 36, and the frequent רָמָה Ramah); מִשְׂגָּב Misgab, Ps. xviii. 2. A summit is ראשׁ as above, or אָמִיר Isa. xvii. 6.

מַעֲלֶה Ma'aleh=ascent, used with many proper names, *e.g.* Akrabbim, or 'the scorpions,' Num. xxxiv. 4; Josh. xv. 3; Judges i. 36; Adummim, Josh. xv. 7, see p. 265; Gur, 2 Kings ix. 27, see p. 388 n.; Ziz, 2 Chron. xx. 16, see p. 272; Luhith in Moab, Isa. xv. 5; Jer. xlviii. 5; Beth-horon, Josh. x. 10; cf. 1 Macc. iii. 16. See also Judges viii. 13. מוֹרָד Môrad is the opposite, used of the descent from Ai to Jericho, Josh. vii. 5; of the Beth-horon, Josh. x. 10; 1 Macc. iii. 24; of Horonaim, Jer. xlviii. 5=ascent of Luhith. Other words for 'pass' were מַעְבָּרָה מַעֲבָר (see p. 337) and נֶקֶב Nekeb, a common word in Arabic, which in the Old Testament is only used as a proper name, Josh. xix. 33; אֲדָמִי הַנֶּקֶב LXX. 'Αρμὲ, καὶ Ναβὸκ or Νακὲβ.

For VALLEY there are the following:—On עֵמֶק 'Emeḳ=*deepening*, and בִּקְעָה Bik'ah=opening, see pp. 384 f.; for 'Emeḳ LXX. gives mostly κοῖλας, also φάραγξ, πεδίον, αὐλών. Here we may add that Elah (1 Sam. xvii. 2, 19), Hebron (Gen. xxxvii. 14),

Ajalon (Josh. x. 12; cf. Isa. xxviii. 21), Jezreel (Josh. xvii. 16; Judges vi. 33; vii. 1; Hosea i. 5) are the only places called 'Emeḳ which are identified past doubt. There were also the Vales of Siddim (Gen. xiv. 3, 8); of Rephaim (Josh. xv. 8), probably the vale to south-east of Jerusalem; of Achor (Josh. vii. 24), probably one of the passes from Jordan into Benjamin; Shaveh (Gen. xiv. 17); Keziz (Josh. xviii. 21); Beth-rehob (Judges xviii. 28), probably the north end of the Jordan Vale; Berachah (2 Chron. xx. 26); Baca (Ps lxxxiv. 6); Succoth (Ps. lx. 6; cviii. 7), again part of the Jordan Valley; Jehoshaphat (Joel iii. 2, 12; cf. v. 14). Like בקעה, עמק is applied to all parts of the Jordan Valley (Josh. xiii. 27; perhaps xviii. 28; Ps. lx. 6). But unlike בקעה it is never extended to any plain so wide as that of the Euphrates, or like the central triangle of Esdraelon (see p. 385). And like בקעה it is used generically for level valley-land, either *ager*, land that can be ploughed (Job xxxix. 10; Ps. lxv. 14, Heb.) or *campus*, ground fit for military manœuvres (Job xxxix. 21; Josh. xvii. 16). Hence its extension was natural to the whole Philistine plain (Jer. xlvii. 5). On בקעה see p. 385. It is applied to broad plains like Esdraelon, or that of the Jordan under Hermon (Josh. xi. 17; xii. 7), or at Jericho (Deut. xxxiv. 3), and even to the valley of the Euphrates (Ezek. iii. 22; xxxviii. 1; Gen. xi. 2), and even to the Maritime Plain. The LXX. render it by πεδίον. The Arabic equivalent to-day is the name of the vale between the Lebanons, as well as of some other level tracts surrounded by hills. For example, the Beḳa, البقعة, or Buḳei'a, البقيعة, a plain on the Belka', to the east of Salt, which we crossed in 1891 from the Jabbok. It is a high secluded vale, about four miles by three, with mountains all round it. Also the Buḳei'a. east of Shechem, and the Buḳei'a, in Judah, above the north end of the Dead Sea. A surrounding of hills seems necessary to the name Biḳ'ah, as if land *laid open* in the midst of hills.

גַּיְא or גַּי Gai (once גֵּיא Isa. xl. 4; and גֵּיא Zech. xiv. 4) is nearer our word *glen* than *valley*. It is generally used for narrower openings than בקעה or עמק. Identified sites to which it was applied are the following: one of the gorges descending from the Moab plateau (Num. xxi. 20, Deut. iii. 29, etc.); the valley of

Hinnom, Josh. xv. 8, etc., etc.; the valley of Jiphthah-el, Josh. xix. 14, 27, perhaps the Wady-el-Kurn in Galilee. In Ps. xxiii. 4 it is used evidently of a narrow ravine, in Zech. xiv. 14 of a sudden rent or cleft through a hill. In 1 Sam. xvii. 3 it is perhaps the ditch of the stream which flows through the 'Emeḳ (see p. 228). LXX. φάραγξ (usually) αὐλών, κοῖλας, νάπη, or transliterated γῆ.

Other words are שָׁוֵה Shaveh, or level, English *dale*, Gen. xiv. 5, in Moab a proper name; Gen. xiv. 7,—מְצוּלָה, מְצוֹלָה Meṣûlah Meṣôlah = a deep, but only once of a valley bottom, מְצֻלָּה Meṣullah, Zech. i. 8. פַּחַת, ravine or abyss (2 Sam. xviii. 17; cf. Ezra. ii. 6, etc.; Neh. vii. 11). נַחַל (see below) used both of a stream and the valley through which it flows.

For Plains, besides עמק and בקעה, there is מישור Mîshôr = level, generally of the table-land, especially of Moab (Deut. iii. 10; Josh. xiii. 9, 16; Jer. xlviii. 21, see p. 548), but also of Bashan (1 Kings xx. 23-35). In 2 Chron. xxvi. 10 it is referred by some (*e.g.* Siegfried-Stade, *Handwörterbuch*) to the Jordan Plain, but even there it may be Moab. In Zech. iv. 7 it is opposed to הַר. From the same root is שָׁרוֹן Shārôn, but always as a proper name, and except in 1 Chron. v. 16, where it refers to a region, east of Jordan (cf. Neub. *Geog. du Talmud*, 47) always of the Maritime Plain from Carmel to Joppa (see p. 147 f.). LXX. δρύμος (Isa. lxv. 10, etc.) and πεδίον (Song ii. 1; 1 Chron. xxvii. 29). On שְׁפֵלָה not *plain*, but *low hills* (see fully, p. 201 ff.). Also אָבֵל Abel, a meadow always in composition, Abel-beth-maacah (1 Kings xv. 20, etc.) or Abel-maim, 2 Chron. xvi. 4, perhaps the present Abil-el-Ḳamh (Rob. *L.R.*); Abel-ha-Shittim (of the acacias, Num. xxxiii. 49) opposite Jericho; Abel-meholah (of the dance or the whirls (?), see p. 581 n. 9); Abel-keramim (of vineyards, Judges xi. 33); Abel-miṣraim (of Egypt, Gen. l. 11). In 1 Sam. vi. 18 read אבן for אבל. For שָׂדֶה field, see p. 79 f. כַּר a watered field, Isa. xxx. 23. כִּכָּר, p. 505. גָּלִיל, p. 413.

On מדבר (German *Trift* from *treiben*) from דבר to drive (*i.e.* herds to pasture) according to Jer. xxv. 24 = *land not sown.* The English version renders it wilderness, or sometimes desert. It is properly land roamed by nomads in opposition to land

occupied by the settled tillers of the soil. ערבה 'Arabah = desert-steppe, is used generally as parallel to Midbar (Isa. xxxvi. 6, etc.; Zech. xiv. 10, etc.). It is from the same root as Arabia and Arab. But as a proper name with the definite article it is generally confined to the Jordan Valley. Deut. ii. 8, etc., etc. (see p. 484). יְשִׁמוֹן Jeshimon, devastation, is a still stronger word. See p. 312, for its application to the wilderness of Judah. In a general signification, Deut. xxxii. 10; Isa. xliii. 19, 20; Ps. lxviii. 7, etc.

For RIVER, the most comprehensive is נהר stream, Ger. *Fluss*, used for a river (Gen. ii. 10; Job xl. 23), but also of smaller streams and even of artificial ones, canals (Ex. viii. 1; Ezek. xxxi. 4; Ps. cxxxvii. 1). The River, הנהר = the Euphrates, Gen. xxxi. 21, etc., etc., but in Isa. xix. 5 singular, ver. 6 plural, the Nile. The Naharaim of Aram-Naharaim are probably the Euphrates and Chabiras (*Z.A.T.* iii. 307 f., Budde *Urgeschichte*, 445 f.). נהר is also used of the sea, and in the plural of its currents or tides (?), Ps. lxvi. 6, xxiv. 2 (but here probably of the great deep under the earth.)

נחל Nahal = Arabic Wâdy, Greek χειμάῤῥοος, Ital. *fiumára*, a winter-torrent and the valley through which it flows (*e.g.* cf. 1 Kings xvii. 3, *hide in Naḥal Kherîth* and ver. 4, *drink of the Naḥal*). Identified valleys of this kind to which it is applied in the Old Testament, are Kedron, 2 Sam. xv. 23; El-Arish, the *river of Egypt*, Num. xxxiv. 5; Josh. xv. 4, etc.; Eshcol, Num. xiii. 23, etc.; Kanah, the present W. Kaneh, Josh. xvi. 8; Sorek W. es Surar, Judges xvi. 4; Gerar, perhaps Wâdy Kibab, Gen. xxvi. 17, cf. 1 Sam. xv. 5. But נחל is also used for large perennial streams like Arnon (Num. xxi. 14; Deut. ii. 24, iii. 8), Jabbok (Gen. xxxii. 23; Deut. ii. 37). Other נְחָלִים not identified are Zared (see p. 557). Besor in north of Judah (1 Sam. xxx. 9, 10, 21); Gaash in Mount Ephraim (Josh. xxiv. 30; Judges ii. 9, etc.; 2 Sam. xxiii. 30; 1 Chron. xi. 32); Cherith (see p. 580); Gad (2 Sam. xxiv. 5); Shittim (Joel iii. 18). A perennial stream is נחל איתן, LXX. generally translates by χειμάῤῥοος, even of Arnon and Jabbok; but also by φάραγξ of Kishon (Josh. xix. 11); Arnon (Deut. ii. 24); Eshcol (Num. xiii. 23); and by ποταμός of El-Arish, 1 Kings viii. 65; by νάπαι, Num. xxvi. 6.

יְאוֹר Ye'ôr=the Nile, Gen. xli. 1-3, etc.; plural,—Nile-canals, Ex. viii. 1; Isa. vii. 18; Nahum. iii. 8; canals in general, Isa. xxxiii. 21; river in general, Dan. xii. 5-7. LXX. ποταμος, except in Isa. xxxiii. 21, διώρυχες, xxxvii. 25 (συναγωγὴν ὕδατος). שִׁיחוֹר or שִׁחוֹר or שִׁחֹר is parallel to יְאוֹר for the Nile, Isa. xxiii. 3; cf. Jer. ii. 18. In Josh. xiii. 3 it is either the Pelusiac branch of the Nile, or the Wâdy el Arish.

פֶּלֶג Peleg is the Arabic Fâleeg (cf. πέλαγος, *fluctus*)=stream, Judges v. 15, 16; Ps. i. 3; xlvi. 4; lxv. 9, etc. אוּבָל=river, Dan. viii. 2, 3, 6. So also יוּבַל, Jer. xvii. 8. (The text מיכל of 2 Sam. xvii. 20 is corrupt.) A canal or conduit is תְּעָלָה Te'alah = bringing up (of Elijah's trench, 1 Kings xviii. 32, etc.; of Jerusalem conduits, 2 Kings xviii. 17; xx. 20; Isa. vii. 3), or שֶׁלַח Shelah=(water) shoot, Neh. iii. 15. אָפִיק is river-bed, Ps. xviii. 16; stream, Ps. cxxvi. 4; Wâdi, Ezek. vi. 3. יַד *hand*=river-side, as we say Dee-side, Deut. ii. 37. שָׂפָה=lip, is bank or brink, Josh. xi. 4, etc.; קָצֶה=end, is either the mouth of a river, Josh. xv. 5; xviii. 19, or the edge of its waters, Josh. iii. 8, 15; גְּדוֹת=banks, Josh. iii. 15, etc. Spates or floods are קרמים (probably, see p. 395); שֶׁטֶף (Ps. xxxii. 6, etc.); שִׁבֹּלֶת (Isa. xxvii. 12: cf. Judges xii.); and perhaps זֶרֶם, though this is rather the burst of rain that makes the flood. מִשְׁבָּר= breaker, was originally billow, 2 Sam. xxii. 5; Jonah ii. 3; but in Ps. xlii. 7 it may be cataract. גַּל parallel to it in Jonah ii. 5=heap or mass of water. הַמַּבּוּל=The Deluge.

On WELLS and SPRINGS (see pp. 77 ff.). Besides עַיִן and בְּאֵר there are מַעְיָן a collective of עַיִן, cf. Josh. xv. 9, etc.; מוֹצָא עַיִם fountain-head (Ps. cvii. 33, 35, etc., cf. Ras el 'Ain, p. 77). מָקוֹר poetical word for a spring that has been dug, Jer. li. 36, etc.; מַבּוּעַ probably=gushing, Isa. xxxv. 7; xlix. 10; גֻּלֹּת bubbling springs, Josh. xv. 19; Judges i. 15. באר or בוֹר is a dry בְּאֵר, cf. Gen. xxxvii. 20; but also used for water, Jer. vi. 7, etc.

CISTERNS, LAKES, POOLS, and PONDS.—For Gennesaret and

the Dead Sea the word is ים = sea ; a bay of this is לָשׁוֹן = tongue or מָחוֹז (or harbour, see p. 132) ; its bed קַרְקַע Amos ix. 3 ; בְּרֵכָה is a pool or tank, 2 Sam. ii. 13, etc.; מִקְוָה a reservoir, Isa. xxii. 11 ; אֲגַם a pond of standing water, Ps. cvii. 35, etc. ; גֵּב = ditch, 2 Kings iii. 16 ; Isa. xxx. 14.

APPENDIX II

(See p. 274)

STADE'S THEORY OF ISRAEL'S INVASION OF WESTERN PALESTINE will be found in vol. i. pp. 133, 141 of his *Geschichte des Volkes Israel.* It may bewilder the reader at first that it should be necessary to seek, as Stade does, a theory so utterly different from the biblical account, but Stade has evidently felt himself compelled to this by his unwillingness to attribute to Israel any but the most physical of impulses in crossing Jordan, and by his belief that the Israelites could never have overcome the Canaanites in war. We shall see how far justified, how far possible of proof, are both of these presuppositions. After the death of Moses (this is Stade's theory) Israel continued to reside on the east of the Jordan for a very long time, during which they passed from the nomadic to the agricultural stage, and consequently increased much in numbers. Eastern Palestine became too small for them, and separate clans were forced to seek new homes across the Jordan. About their passage into Western Palestine, Stade asserts three things : *First*, that they did not cross at once as a united body, but gradually, clan by clan. Joshua is an entirely legendary personage, an Eponymus of Ephraim, one of the clans. *Second*, they crossed peacefully, and won land west of Jordan by purchase or treaty, not by war. *Third*, they crossed not at Jericho, for at that time opposite Jericho lay Moabite, and not Israelite, territory, but farther north at Jabbok, where the Israelite population east of Jordan was most dense. Such is Stade's theory. Its presupposition—that Israel had no impulse to cross Jordan except a physical one, no memory of her forefathers' possession of the land, no consciousness of national unity, no impetus

derived from the long leadership of Moses, no desire for a national territory on surer ground than the east of Jordan afforded, nothing but the spilling over of her increasing numbers—that is an absolute negative which it is simply impossible to prove, even if it were not opposed, as it is, to the entire body of Israelite tradition, and inconsistent with Israel's subsequent history. Is it possible that so ancient (for it is found in the earliest poems), so widespread (for it occurs in every source) a tradition, as that Israel was conscious of her unity and her leadership by Jehovah in crossing Jordan, can be wrong? Is it possible that Israel, which became what she did, had not already (especially after all Moses did and taught) some sense of her national destiny, and was not left to the mere unconscious drift of an increasing population? But to go on from this presupposition, which I think groundless, to the three points deduced from it. *First*, that the passage of Jordan was gradual, clans by clans, and that Joshua was no real person. Stade bases his assertion that Joshua is merely the personification of the clan Ephraim on the statement that he is known to only one of the documents, the Ephraimite E. But Kuenen (*Onderzoek*, sec. ed. § 13), Dillmann (in his commentary), and Budde (*Z.A.T.W.* vii. 133; *Ri. u. Sam.*) have all shown that Joshua was known also to the Judæan source J—a fact of which Kittel rightly says, that 'it can hardly be doubted' (*Gesch.* i. 248). But if there be no reason to doubt that Joshua was real, then we have a personal centre for the whole people while crossing the Jordan and settling upon Western Palestine, only less strong than that round which they had previously been kept united, viz. Moses. *Second*, Stade supposes that Israel's occupation of the land was peaceful. In Western Palestine there was much forest-land unoccupied on the hills. Part of this the Canaanites, who had the towns and the valley-land, gladly sold or gave away to various Israelite clans, in order to prevent Israel's military seizure of land (the possibility of which, observe, Stade admits). His arguments for this are (*a*) that the Canaanites were too strong for Israel to acquire land by force; (*b*) that the Israelite occupation was only partial and for a long time outside the chief houses; (*c*) that for a long time Israel lived on peaceful relations, intermarriage, etc., with Canaan. But (*a*)

is not true. It is probable (from extra-biblical evidence) that Western Palestine at this time was inhabited by tribes that were disunited and greatly weakened by previous wars. This was not the only time in Syria's history that Arab tribes in the flush of their strength and hope defeated the degenerate, though better equipped, settled populations. Stade himself admits both that the Canaanites submitted to a peaceful occupation only under fear of a military one, and that certain tribes of Israel (Dan, Simeon, and Levi) did win their land by the sword. Again (*b*) is admitted in the narrative, and is as compatible with a warlike as with a peaceful invasion. A partial occupation by war is in harmony with all we know of the methods of Semitic warfare—the fierce rush at a territory, and if complete success does not follow, exhaustion of energy, acquiescence with what has been gained. Nor is (*c*) incompatible with a military invasion of the kind just described. But turning from these reasons to the assertion itself —if Stade be right that Israel won parts of Western Palestine by treaty and purchase, why is there no trace in the narratives, dealing with the time, of such transactions? Why is the tradition of a military conquest so solid?

It is in connection with this, and with Stade's *Third* position, that Geography comes in. He holds that Israel could not have crossed at Jericho, for Eastern Palestine opposite Jericho was at this time not Israelite but Moabite territory. Yet this is by no means certain. What we do know is that in later times Eastern Palestine opposite Jericho was in Moab's hands; but this surely is a reason against supposing that the tradition of Israel's crossing at this place was a late tradition. Stade says that tradition merely fixed on the Jordan at Jericho as a likely place; but would this have seemed a likely place at a time when the Eastern bank was in Moab's hands? The rise, therefore, of a tradition of the passage of the Jordan just here became more and more (as I have said, p. 275) improbable as the centuries went on. Turning now to Western Palestine, we find the strong geographical reasons for the passage at Jericho which I have already given (pp. 275 f.). In Western Palestine, as every one admits, Israel was divided at first into two parts: the Joseph tribes were settled in Mount Ephraim, and the tribe of Judah on the plateau

to the south of Jerusalem, but in between them there were strong Canaanite settlements.[1] Now, what other point of entrance better corresponds than Jericho does to this disposition of the tribes? Had Israel crossed at Jabbok, it is not easy to see how some tribes got into Judah as well as some into Mount Ephraim, unless you suppose, with some scholars (so Oort's *Atlas*), that the tribe Judah never crossed the Jordan, but came up into its settlements through the Negeb: a supposition for which there is no real evidence. But take the statement of the Book of Joshua (to which more than one document contributes) that Israel crossed as a whole by Jericho. Then how natural is the subsequent disposition of the tribe—for roads lead up from Jericho equally into Mount Ephraim, the plateau of Benjamin, and the centre and south of Judæa. Again, the easy capture of Jericho is a fact which all the subsequent history of the town renders probable. As we have seen (pp. 267 f.), Jericho never once stood a siege. Finally, the existence of Israel's central camp at Gilgal for a considerable period, while the hill-country was being subdued (Josh. x. 43), receives an interesting proof in support of its possibility from the analogous case of the Canaanites who ruled the hill-country from Gilgal as a centre (Deut. xi. 30).

APPENDIX III

ON THE WARS AGAINST SIHON AND OG

(See pp. 560 and 575)

The War against Sihon the king of the Amorites.—The unreality of this war, and the reference of the song (Num. xxi. 27-30) to an invasion of Moab by Israel in the ninth century, have been argued for by Meyer (*Z.A.T.W.*, 1881, pp. 118 ff.); Stade (*Gesch.* i. 117 ff.); and after them Addis (*Documents of the Hexateuch* i. p. 174). Against them Dillmann (in

[1] Although the tribe of Benjamin had already occupied its territory, as Kittel has shown (*Gesch.* p. i. 265 f.). There is no reason for supposing that the tribe Benjamin was not formed till after the settlement of Ephraim. It was there from the first, and on the territory which the Book of Joshua assigns to it.

Numbers, etc., 2nd ed. pp. 128 ff.), Kuenen (*Onderzoek*, i. 13, 13), Wellhausen (*Hist.*), support the fact of the war. The arguments may be summed up as follows: Reasons against the historical character of the war against Sihon; (1) It is mentioned only in E (Num. xxi.) and D (ii. 24 ff.: Judges xii. 13 is, according to Budde, an insertion taken directly from E., *Richter u. Sam.* p. 125); (2) Neither P nor J says anything about it; but (3) on the contrary both represent Sihon's land as if still in possession of Moab, or at least with the name of Moab; *e.g.* in P there is Num. xxii. 1, the Israelites encamped *in Arboth-Moab, opposite Jericho*, and in JE (Num. xxii. 41; xxiii. 14, 28) Balak of Moab brings Balaam to Bamoth as if it were his own territory.

To these reasons it may be replied, (1) E is the oldest document; (2) though neither P nor J mentions the war with Sihon, they do not give a story nor any detail inconsistent with the occurrence of such a war. For instance, they do not say that Israel took the land between Arnon and Jabbok from Moab or Ammon, which indeed would have been a contradiction of E. On the contrary, the only trace of a war between Moab and Israel is a fragment of E's own in Josh. 24, 9; (3) though Moab had been driven out by Sihon from her proper territory, her name would more or less remain attached to it; so that though the place Israel encamped on opposite Jericho was called Arboth-Moab, that need not mean that Moab still possessed it. Dillmann, too, points out that Sihon's conquest of Heshbon need not be taken to mean that all the Moabites were banished. Again, D, which gives the war with Sihon for the land between Jabbok and Arnon, nevertheless calls the latter the land of Moab (i. 5; xxviii. 69; xxxiv. 5).

There can be no objection to the story itself. There is nothing incredible in it. If in later centuries all Israel under David, and Northern Israel under Omri, crossed Jordan and occupied the territory of Moab, the Amorites may well have done the same. And, again, there was nothing to be gained by inventing the story.

We come now to the song itself.

Those who believe that it does not refer to a war on the Amorites, at Israel's first entrance to the land, but to an invasion of

Moabite territory from the west of the Jordan, in the ninth century, allege that the course of conquest it marks is from north to south, the line of the latter invasion, but they have to omit the words, *the king of the Amorites Sihon* in ver. 29, and take Sihon as a king of Moab. But against ver. 29*d* there is no objection, apart from the requirements of this theory. Leave it, and interpret the first line of conquest traced in the poem (vv. 28, 29) as that of Sihon over Moab, and you do not violate the geography.

To sum up: the theory of Meyer and Stade, that the war with Sihon is unhistorical, and that the poem refers to a conquest by Israel of Moab in the ninth century, can only be held by sacrificing vv. 26 and 29*d*, against neither of which is there any objection apart from this theory; while the story of the war against Sihon as told by E is neither improbable in itself, nor inconsistent with the data in J and P, nor likely to have been invented.

2. THE WAR WITH OG, KING OF BASHAN.—This war has not the same documentary evidence in its support. In Num. xxi. the account of it is an insertion (vv. 33 ff.) obviously from the hand of a Deuteronomic writer. No characteristic phrases of the Deuteronomist occur in it. Nor, except perhaps in three cases, is there any mention of this war in the Hexateuch, outside the well-marked Deuteronomic passages, Num. xxi. 33 ff.; Deut. i. 4; iii.; iv. 47; xxix. 7; Josh. xii. 4. The doubtful passages are Num. xxxii. 33, which is assigned by Kautsch to a late edition; Josh. ix. 10, which Kautsch assigns to JE, but Dillmann regards as an insertion, and Josh. xiii. 30, which is probably from the Priestly Writing. The passage, 1 Kings iv. 19, is Deuteronomic. The story, therefore, we owe to the Deuteronomist, and we have no such reminiscence of it as is left us of the war with Sihon in the song. On this account, many who admit Sihon as a historical reality, decline so to receive Og. It is one of those cases where proof is absolutely impossible; and we must allow that we have not the amount of evidence we had in Sihon's case. At the same time Og was indissolubly bound with Sihon in the memory and tradition of the people, and it is difficult to see how he can have been invented. There is no geographical obstacle in the way of a campaign north of the Jabbok. Edrei would be

as likely a place for Israel to fight with a king of Bashan as any other, while the fact that no battles are mentioned farther north towards Damascus, or on the east side of the Lake of Galilee, where it would have been even easier for the popular memory to have invented victories for Moses, is a proof that the tradition was restrained by actual historical facts. Critics, who assign to Israel a very long residence in the east of Jordan, should be ready to admit of such an extension of their conquest northward by the easiest route to places so attractive as those of Bashan, before the crossing of Jordan was attempted.

APPENDIX IV

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF EASTERN PALESTINE

AUTHORITIES on the East of the Jordan are as follows (I mark those I have not seen by an asterisk) :—Volney, *Voyage en Syrie*, etc., 1783-1785, II. (Eng. Ed. 1812); Seetzen's *Reisen durch Syrien* in 1806; Burckhardt, *Travels in Syria and the Holy Land in* 1810-1812 (London, 1822); Buckingham, *Travels in Palestine, through the countries of Bashan and Gilead in* 1816 (London, 1821); *Travels among the Arab tribes east of Syria*, etc. (London, 1825); Irby and Mangles' *Travels in Egypt, Syria*, etc., 1817, 1818 (London, 1822); *Schubert (and Roth), *Reise in's Morgenland*, 1837 (the first to discover the great depth of the Dead Sea below the Mediterranean); Robinson, *Bib. Res.* (made in 1838), especially vol. ii., containing journey to Petra; Molyneux's 'Expedition to Dead Sea in 1847,' in *Journal of Royal Geographical Society*, xviii. pp. 126 ff.; Lynch's *Narrative of U.S. Expedition in* 1848, including visit to Kerak; in 1852 Robinson visited Pella and Wady Yâbis (see *Later Bib. Res.*, sec. viii. (London, 1856); Porter, *Five Years in Damascus, with Travels, etc., in Palmyra, Lebanon, and the Hauran* (London, 1855); *Roth in Petermann's *Mittheilungen*, 1857 and 1858, journeys about Kerak southward to Akabah; G. Rey, *Voyage dans le Haouran et aux bords de la Mer Morte in* 1858; Wetzstein, *Reisebericht über Hauran u. die Trachonen* (1858), (Berlin, 1860); *Wetzstein's and Dörgen's

expedition farther south in 1800, in Petermann's *Mittheil.* 1866; De Saulcy in 1863 visited Ammon, Hesban, etc., *Voy. en Terre Sainte*, i., 1865: *Duc de Luynes, *Voy. d'exploration à la Mer Morte, à Petra, et sur la rive gauche du Jourdain in* 1864 (pub. in 1874), vol. ii. contains Mavor's and Sanvaire's expedition to Kerak, Shobek, etc.; Wilson and Anderson, 1866, in *P.E.F.Q.*, vol. i.; Warren, *Reconnaissance of Jordan Valley*, 1867; and in *P.E.F.Q.*, i. and ii.; Palmer and Drake, *Desert of Tih and Country of Moab* in *P.E.F.Q.*, 1871; the two Kieperts travelled from Amman by Gadara to Muzeirib in 1870, **Zeitschrift der Ges. für Erdkunde* (Berlin, v.); Northey's *Expedition East of Jordan in* 1871 (*P.E.F.Q.*, 1872); Tristram's journey of 1871 in *Land of Moab*, 1874; Porter's journey of 1874 in *P.E.F.Q.*, 1881; Kersten's journey to Dead Sea and Moab, 1874, in *Z.D.P.V.*, ii.; Expedition of American Society in 1876, in Merrill's *East of the Jordan* (London, 1881); Schick's journey to Moab in 1877 is described with map in *Z.D.P.V.*, ii.; in 1881 Langer made a short journey, reported in **Mitth. d. Geogr. Ges. in Wien*, 1882; Burton and Drake, *Unexplored Syria*; Laurence Oliphant's *Land of Gilead*, 1880. In 1881 Conder and Mantell began that brave, skilful survey of Eastern Palestine, which the Turkish authorities brought to so abrupt a conclusion. For account of this survey, see *P.E.F.Q.*, 1881, 1882; *P.E.F. Mem.* on Eastern Palestine, and Conder, *Heth and Moab*, 1885. In 1884, the English Geological Expedition, under Hull and Kitchener, surveyed the south end of Dead Sea and regions round about, *P.E.F.Q.*, 1884, and Geolog. vol. in *P.E.F. Mem.* In 1884 Guy Le Strange visited Pella, Ajlûn, and the Belka', *P.E.F.Q.*, 1885, also in Schumacher's *Across Jordan*, in which is given Oliphant's *Trip to N.E. of Lake Tiberias.* Schumacher's very careful and important surveys and travels, from 1885 onward, are described in *Across the Jordan, being an Exploration and Survey of part of Hauran and Jaulan* (London, 1886: published by *P.E.F.*; *The Jaulan*, surveyed for the *D.P.V.* (Eng. Ed. 1888); *Pella; Ajlun; Abila of the Decapolis* as supplement to *P.E.F.Q.* 1889.

Other more recent works are Scharling, *Hauran: Reisebilder aus Palästina* (Bremen, 1890). In *Z.D.P.V.* among others:—

Stubel, *Reise nach den Diret et Tulul*, etc., with map, XII.; Van Kasteren, *Journey in Gilead*, XIII.

In *P.E.F.Q.*, Post, *Narrative of a Scientific Expedition in the Trans-Jordanic Region in the Spring of* 1886, vol. for 1888.

The volumes and articles on the inscriptions of Eastern Palestine will be found given on p. 15.

APPENDIX V

ROADS AND WHEELED VEHICLES IN SYRIA

(See p. 329)

JUDAH's progress in the matter of chariots is interesting. Joshua houghed all horses and burnt all chariots taken in war (Josh. xi. 6, 9). David houghed most of the horses, but kept a hundred for himself (2 Sam. viii. 4). Solomon had 1400 chariots which he placed in chariot cities, and also with the king at Jerusalem (1 Kings x. 26). That is to say, there would be but few at Jerusalem, where the ground was quite unsuitable for their manœuvre, and the depôts of them were at cities in the 'Arabah or Shephelah, where they would be of more use. There was a Beth Mercabhoth in the Negeb. The only instances of chariots driving into Jerusalem are mentioned p. 330. But see also 2 Sam. xvi., where Absalom is mentioned as having chariots, whether in Jerusalem is uncertain; and Isa. xxiii., where the Assyrian chariots fill the valley of Jehoshaphat.

Wheeled vehicles drawn by oxen were used in agriculture from the earliest times, 1 Sam. vi. 10; 2 Sam. vi. 3 (cf. Amos ii. 13, here, perhaps, rather threshing-rollers). As a nomadic race, who, when they settled, settled in a rough hilly country, Israel would not soon take to wheels; and the earliest carts or waggons mentioned in the Bible came from Philistia or Egypt (1 Sam. vi. 10; Gen. xlv. 19, etc.). Chariots were introduced from Mesopotamia, and later from Egypt (who herself had the chariot and horse from Asia). The Syrians, with their flat country south of Damascus, were strong in chariots, and Samaria lay on the main road between Egypt and Damascus, which crossed her

north-west corner, and was used by chariots (*Travels of an Egyptian*, see p. 152).

Roads, in our sense of the term, were not necessary for these waggons and chariots. In 1891, on the east of Jordan, we met a number of Circassians driving bullock-carts all the way from Damascus to Jerash and Rabboth-Ammon. But artificial roads of some kind or other appear to have existed in Palestine from the earliest times. The מסלה, Authorised Version *highway*, is literally *heaped up*, often only for temporary purposes, such as the visit of royalty, cf. Isa. xlv., lxii. 10 (I have seen the like on the visit of the Khedive Tewfik to Siout in Upper Egypt in 1880); but also for permanent use, Num. xx. 19; Judges xx. 31; 1 Sam. vi. 12; 1 Chron. xxvi. 16; Jer. xxxi. 21. Roads were enjoined to be made to the cities of refuge (Deut. xix. 3).

In the New Testament, outside the visions of Revelation, horses and chariots, except in one instance, do not exist, a curious contrast to the Old Testament, and proof of the pacific plebeian character of the kingdom of Him who came *riding upon an ass*. The exception is the chariot of the treasurer of Queen Candace (Acts viii. 28 ff.).

The Romans were the first to make great roads in Palestine, and this not till the times of the Antonines in the second half of the second century. The milestones are chiefly of Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius. The roads rendered driving easy over all the land.

After the Moslem invasion the first Khalifs kept up the Roman roads in Syria, with a service of stage-coaches and posts. The Latin word *mile* was adopted, الميل El-Mil. One Arab milestone has been discovered on the road between Jerusalem and Jericho, at Khan-el-Hatroura, inscribed as placed by 'the servant of God, Abd-el-Melik, prince of believers. May the mercy of God be to him. From Damascus to this milestone is 109 miles.' This was the Khalif Abd-el-Melek ibn Merwan, 65-86 of the Hejra, builder of the so-called mosque of Omar. See Clermont-Ganneau, *Recueil d'Archéologie Orientale*, 201 ff.: 'Une Pierre Milliaire Arabe de Palestine du 1ere siècle de l'hégire.'

In the times of the Crusades, 'the royal roads, which generally replaced the ancient Roman ways, still appear to have been

used by wheeled vehicles. As for others, there is every cause to think that they were only mule-paths.'[1]

The decay of all these great roads, and the disappearance of wheeled vehicles from the land—till very recently—was due, of course, to the conquest of Syria by nomad and desert tribes whose only means of locomotion were animals. The few roads and carriages now in existence are entirely of Frank or Circassian origin. There is the splendid Alpine road from Beyrout to Damascus, with branches, and good roads from Jaffa to Jerusalem, Jerusalem to Jericho and Hebron, Jaffa to Nablus (constructing), and Haifa to Nazareth; also one partly made from Damascus along the Hajj route. Already one railway is opened from Jaffa to Jerusalem, and another is in process of construction from Haifa to Damascus.

[1] Rey, *Colonies Franques*, 254.

ADDITIONAL NOTES TO THE SECOND EDITION

*** *Those to Chapter IX. will be found at the end of that chapter*

Pp. 8, 523, 525, note 673.—The Aneezeh. Burton spells the name 'Anazeh (so also Conder). Wetzstein (*Reisebericht*) gives it as 'Anezeh.

P. 13.—The mediæval belief that Palestine was the central province of the earth, the very centre being found in Jerusalem, is well illustrated in a map of Marino Sanuto, which Mr. Bartholomew and I hope to reproduce in our *Historical Atlas of the Holy Land.* See Bongar's *Gesta Dei Per Francos*, vol. ii.

P. 14.—Of the recently discovered Aramæan inscriptions in Senjerli the best account is given in *Die Altsemitischen Inschriften von Sendscherli*, von David Heinrich Müller; Hölder, Vienna, 1893. Cf. Conder, in *Contemporary Review* for September 1894.

P. 15, note 1.—To the various collection of inscriptions from the East of the Jordan there is now to be added that by the Rev. W. Ewing in the *P.E.F.Q.* for January 1895.

P. 16, note 1.—To the list of historical and geographical authorities in the Græco-Roman period in Syria add Heinrich Kiepert's *Formae Orbis*

Antiquae (Berlin : Dietrich Reimer), the first part of which has just been published. The letterpress is in English.

P. 20.—I understand that for the present the construction of the railway from Haifa to Damascus has been suspended.

P. 78, top of note.—'Ain Sinia. Conder (*Critical Review*, iv. 293) says there is a good spring to north-east of village. See *P.E.F. Mem.* ii. 291.

P. 130.—Conder doubts whether Dor, now Tanturah, is the Merla of the Crusaders.

P. 135, note 2.—For the converse view of Syria from Cyprus, see Felix Fabri, *P.P.T.* i. 198.

P. 153.—On the roads through Philistia, compare Plate IV. As stated in the text (cf. also p. 193), there was undoubtedly a road from Ashdod by the modern Burkah and Beshshit to Ekron and Ramleh, and it ought, therefore, to be marked on the maps, though not so prominently as the main road from Ashdod to Jamnia.

P. 157, note 4.—Compare Milton, *Paradise Lost*, book II. ; Felix Fabri, *P.P.T.* ii. 470.

P. 159.—The Rev. Thomas G. Selby (now of Liverpool) informs me, 'in connection with the descriptions of the Plague in Hong-Kong in the early part of the present year (1894), that there were swellings round the loins and under the armpits, I should think identical in character, as far as one can judge, with the tumours which afflicted the Philistines. The outbreak of the Plague was preceded by a frightful mortality among the rats. The Plague in Central China, nine or ten years ago, was also preceded by such foreshadowing of its approach in the death of rats, etc. Was the Plague in Ashdod preceded by some such phenomenon, and does the making of the votive images of golden mice point to some such incident in the event?'

P. 162 ff.—For a very instructive paper on Elijah, St. George, and El Khudr, see the *Z.D.P.V.* for 1894.

P. 234, note 4.—To authorities on Lachish excavated, add Bliss, *A Mound of Many Cities, or Tell el Hesy Excavated*, with upwards of 250 illustrations, published for the Palestine Exploration Fund, 1894.

P. 243, note 1.—Conder is doubtful whether the inscriptions are older than the twelfth century, but does not give reasons (*Critical Review*, iv. 295).

Pp. 279-280, note on Dhaheriyah.—In his review of this volume in the *Academy*, Professor Sayce (cf. *P.E.F.Q.* January 1893) says: 'The little information given as to the site of the city, *i.e.* Kiriath-Sepher, in the Old Testament seems to exclude its identification with Dhaheriyeh, where, moreover, Professor Petrie found no remains of early date. The name Debir more naturally signifies "Sanctuary," as in 1 Kings vi. 5, than "Back."' With this, however, I cannot agree. As Dr. Sayce goes on to point out, W. Max Müller has suggested Beth-Thupar of *The Travels of a Mohar* as equivalent to the Hebrew Beth-Sopher, 'House of the Scribe,' and, supposing that the writer transposed Kiriath and Beth, identifies Beth-Thupar with Kiriath-Sepher, which he accordingly points Kiriath-Sopher, in contra-

diction both of the Massoretic and Septuagint texts. In this Dr. Sayce agrees with Dr. Müller. I cannot, however, but think that the several steps by which they reach their conclusion are too precarious to be trusted.

P. 425, note 1.—For Beth She'arim Conder proposes Sha'rah, on the Tabor Plateau.

P. 468, note 2.—To the depressions of land below the level of the sea, add that in the Liukchun oasis in Central Asia. According to the *Izvestiya* of the Russian Geographical Society, No. 1, 1894 (quoted in *The Scottish Geographical Magazine*, vol. x. p. 542), the salt lake, Bojaite, which forms the lowest part of the Liukchun hollow, is about 330 feet below Turfan, which is itself 160 feet below sea-level.

P. 490, note 4.—I notice, however, that J. S. Poloner mentions (*P.P.T.* ed. p. 27) that he saw lions in 1421.

P. 502, line 2.—On buoyancy of Dead Sea, cf. Josephus v. *Wars*, ix. To references in note 2 add Aristotle, *Meteorics*, book II.

P. 503, line 6.—On surroundings of Dead Sea, cf. Felix Fabri ed. *P.P.T.* ii. 164.

Pp. 505-508.—The site of the Cities of the Plain. With regard to the statements on p. 505 that the question of this site is insoluble, and on p. 508 that I wonder at the confidence with which it has been decided, whether for north or south of the Dead Sea, the Rev. W. F. Birch has kindly favoured me with a statement of his reasons for the northern situation. They are mainly those I have stated on p. 506, with emphasis laid on the opinion that the 'Kikkar' and 'the Kikkar of Jordan' are names not applicable to the south of the Dead Sea; and with these additions, that a Zoar on the south-eastern edge of the Dead Sea would not be visible from Pisgah (Deut. xxxiv. 3), and that, 'in Isaiah xv. 4, 5, 6 and Jeremiah xlviii. 34, Zoar (near Sodom) is connected rather with places towards the north of Moab than towards the south.' Now, except that I do not feel the impossibility of the extension of the name Kikkar of Jordan to the south end of the Dead Sea, just as the present name Ghor is so extended, I grant the strength of Mr. Birch's reasons. They are strong; yet so also are the reasons of Clermont Ganneau and others for the south (see pp. 506, 507). And that is why, though I might favour the one rather than the other, that I still feel neither side can afford to be dogmatic.

Pp. 515-516.—The relative passage in Josephus is vii. *Wars*, viii. ix.

P. 521.—The goddess Hygeia. Cf. Mr. Ewing's inscriptions, No. 124. *P.E.F.Q.* January 1895.

P. 535.—The Belka'. In 1893 a new mutasseraflik was established south of Arnon, the centre with police garrison at Ma'an near Petra; and a Kaimakam with a small garrison at Kerak. This also modifies note 1, p. 533.

P. 537, note 3 (continued on 538).—Some of the great castles in Gilead date probably in part from the Crusades. Salt and Rubud may have been held by the Franks for some time. The Crusaders have left their marks on the ruins about Heshbon.

P. 538.—On the name Cœle-Syria, as understood in the Middle Ages, see

Felix Fabri, *P.P.T.* i. 198, where it seems to be taken as equal to Syria north of Galilee.

P. 586, note 2.—Conder (*Critical Review*, iv. 290) thinks the site he proposes for Mahanaim suitable. 'The locality is well watered, and contains several important ruins.'

Pp. 623-624, note 3.—The name Nabatean survived for some years the fall of the Nabatean kingdom. 'Annelus the Nabatean' occurs on an inscription of 140 A.D. Wadd. 2437; Ewing, 94.

P. 628.—To note 1 add: especially Wadd. 2457, Ewing, 74. To list of Nabatean deities add: Adad, Ewing, 51, from Khabab; Ogenes at 'Ary, Wadd. 2440, Ewing, 99; Heracles at Nejran of the Manemenoi, Wadd. 2428, Ewing, 114.

P. 629.—To note 3 add: Ewing, 44, an inscription from Es-Sunamein.

P. 633.—To note 1 add: De Rossi suggests that XMΓ stands for Χριστὸς, Μίχαήλ, Γαβριήλ.

P. 647, second paragraph.—The Bawabat Allah, the southern gateway of Damascus, is actually called in Turkish Misr Kapusi, or Egyptian Gate. See Mrs. Burton's *Inner Life of Syria*, ed. 1884, p. 51.

Note on the Spelling and Derivation of the name Lejá.

In the First Edition this name was spelt with double 'j,' thus Lejjah, for which form a suitable derivation might have been found in the Arabic لُجّ, Lujj, 'a mass of water,' 'a great depth of sea,' and by comparison 'a rough place on a mountain' (Kamus), see pp. 615 f. Conder also gives Lejja as a North Syrian word for basalt (*Critical Review*, iv. 289). But the pronunciation of the name appears, according to all the best authorities, to be indubitably with one 'j'—Lejah, El-Lejah, اللجا, the accent on the last syllable. So Burckhardt, 'Ledjah'; Wetzstein, 'Lega''; Burton, 'Lejah'; Merrill, 'Lejah'; Fischer and Guthe's map, 'El-Ledschah'; and the Rev. W. Ewing (in a private letter to myself), 'El-Lejá'.' This form may very well be the same as the Arabic noun لَجَأ, 'a refuge or asylum' (Kam). And the North Syrian common noun for 'basalt,' according to Conder, 'Lejja,' would in that case be a derivative from the name of the region from which North Syria chiefly derives its great basalt mill-stones, see p. 614.

ADDITIONAL NOTES TO THE FOURTH EDITION

P. 4, note 2.—Willrich, *Juden u. Griechen vor der Makkab. Erhebung*, 1895, p. 43, takes Herodotus to mean by Palästina only Philistia. Kirchhoff (*Peterm. Mitth.*, 1895, p. 10) distinguishes a threefold use by Herodotus of the name.

P. 63, note 1.—To the authorities given add: 'Das Klima von Jerusalem, dargestellt von Chaplin, u. bearbeitet von Kersten,' *Z.D.P.V.*, 1891, xiv. 93-112; Kaisner, 'Die Meteorologie der Bibel,' in *Das Wetter*, a meteorological monthly, 1892, ix. Heft 2 (not seen); 'Wetterberichte aus Jerusalem,' in *Warte des Tempels*, 1894. The D.P.V. have lately established a large number of new stations for weather observations. See paper by Dr. O. Kersten in *M.u.N.D.P.V.*, 1895, 49 ff.

P. 64, lines 23, 24.—Song ii. 11: winter here is סְתָיו, probably=rainy season; cf. Arab. *shitâ*. Further, in *P.E.F.Q.*, 1894, Glaisher gives average annual rainfall in Jerusalem as very nearly that of London; but his tables illustrate the extreme differences between one year and another.

P. 65, note 2.—According to 1 Macc. xiii. 22 a snowstorm prevented Trypho from invading the hill-country of Judæa; cf. Jos. xiv. *Ant.* xv. 4.

P. 67, note 1.—On the evening breeze, cf. Gen. iii. 8. See also Song ii. 17.

P. 80.—Blanckenhorn, *Z.D.P.V.* xv. 62, followed by Buhl (*Geogr.* pp. 54, 55), takes the decrease of cultivation in Syria to be due to a diminution of damp and cold in the climate, which he alleges to have continued from prehistoric times, when its reality is proved by geology, into historic; cf. also Fraas, *Aus dem Orient*, i. 198 ff. But Benzinger is in agreement with the opinion I have stated. He says: 'that within historical times the climate has changed, and in particular was formerly more rainy, is an opinion which cannot be proved either from the information of the Old Testament or from the present condition of the country' (*Archäologie*, p. 32).

P. 83, first paragraph.—Honey, in the frequent phrase *milk and honey* (Gen. xliii. 11, etc. etc.), would appear not to be the honey of bees, but the sweet syrup manufactured from grapes (cf. Benzinger, *Arch.* p. 91; Buhl, *Geogr.* p. 57). Yet this interpretation does not suit Isa. vii. 22, cf. v. 23. In this passage honey must mean bee-honey.

P. 130.—On Dor. Schumacher (*P.E.F.Q.*, 1895, p. 113) reports the collapse of the tower, 'el Burj.'

P. 147.—On Crocodile River cf. Pliny, *N.H.* v. 17. Crocodiles have been found in recent times; cf. Robinson, *Phys. Geog.* p. 189, and *P.E.F.Mem.* ii. 3.

P. 148.—The Nahr el Ḳaṣab or River of Reeds, mentioned by Boha-ed-din, *Vita Saladini*, ed. Schultens, pp. 191, 193, is perhaps the Mufjir, yet Guérin, *Sam.* ii. 384 ff., finds the Nahr el Ḳaṣab in the Fâlik. With the name Ḳaṣab is to be compared the Hebrew *Ḳanah*. See p. 249.

P. 164.—On Dajûn and Beit Dajôn see Baldensperger, *P.E.F.Q.*, 1895, p. 114, with list of place-names.

P. 186, note 3.—Bertrandon de la Brocquière, on his way from Jerusalem to Gaza, says that between Hebron and Gaza he 'crossed a desert country.' Bohn's *Early Travels*, p. 289.

P. 201 f.—Buhl (*Geog.* p. 104), while wrongly asserting that I hold the use of the name Shephelah to have been 'exclusively' limited to the Low Hills, offers several reasons in proof of its common extension over the Maritime Plain. I have stated and replied to these in an article in the *Expositor* for December 1896.

P. 212.—Modon, 'a village on a high hill in sight of the convent of St. John' (Maundrell). In *Revue Biblique*, pp. 1109 ff. (quoted by Buhl, p. 198), Le Camus contests the interpretation of 1 Macc. xiii. 29 f., according to which Modeeim was visible from the sea; but Buhl says he gives no good reasons for a more southerly position than the one generally accepted.

P. 229, note 1.—On the name Adullam: Nestle, *M.u.N.D.P.V.*, 1895, p. 43. He identifies it with the ספרמים of 1 Sam. xvii. 1, LXX. But see Seybold, *ibid.* 1896, p. 25.

P. 233, note 2.—There is a great deal of evidence that Mareshah and Moresheth-Gath were two distinct places. See the author's *Twelve Prophets*, i. 376, 385. The present Mer'ash, one mile south of Beit-Jibrin, is spelt the same as מָרֵאשָׁה, the form of the name Mareshah in Josh. xv. 44 (elsewhere מָרֵשָׁה). Moresheth-Gath, Micah (i. 14, 15) distinguishes from Mareshah, and so does Jerome, both in the *Onomasticon* and the *Epitaph. S. Paulae*, placing 'Morasthi' as a village to the east of Eleutheropolis, and 'Maresa' as ruins on the second milestone from the same. Benjamin of Tudela (Bohn's *Early Travels*, p. 87) identifies Mareshah with Beit-Jibrin.

P. 233, note 3.—See *P.E.F.Q.*, 1886, pp. 50 ff., 148 ff.

236.—Eltekeh, I am now led to think, lay in the Vale of Sorek to the east, but not far, from Ekron. See article 'Eltekeh' in Cheyne and Black's forthcoming *Bible Dictionary*.

P. 249.—On Brook Kanah. See above, Additional Note to p. 148.

P. 254, note 1.—Buhl points out against Schlatter that the LXX. of Josh. x. 10, *Ωρωνειν* (cf. LXX. of 2 Sam. xiii. 34) confirms the meaning of Sanballat's title, the Horônî (Neh. ii. 10, 19; xiii. 28), as 'citizen of Beth-Horon' (*Geog.* p. 169).

P. 270, note 2.—Cf. Josh. xv. 61, 62.

P. 272.—'The ascent of Ziz,' מַעֲלֵה הַצִּיץ, means literally ascent of the flower, but the second part of it may have been a proper name, cf. LXX. *Ασσεις*, L. *Ασισα*, and as such connected with the name of Engedi, חַצְצוֹן תָּמָר. 2 Ch. xx. 2, LXX. *Ασασων Θαμαρ.* חַצְצוֹן תָּמָר, Gen. xiv. 7, LXX. *'Ασασουνθαμαρ.*

With the Vale of Berachah, cf. the ruins now known as Berêkût in the wilderness of Tekoa.

Another place of military fame in the wilderness of Tekoa is 'the water of

the pool Asphar,' *τὸ ὕδωρ Λάκκου* 'Ασφάρ [1 Macc. ix. 33 א V but A has Ασφαλ]. *Λάκκος* is the usual LXX. rendering of בְּאֵר or בּוֹר. The Be'er Asphar is probably the modern Bir-Selhub, a large cistern six miles WSW. of En-gedi, and near the junction of several roads (Robinson, *B.R.* ii. 202). The hills around still bear the name Sufra. Others (*e.g.* Buhl, *Geog.* p. 158) identify Asphar with the ruin and cistern Ez-Za'ferâne to the south of Tekoa.

P. 277, note 1.—It is now probable that, if Deut. xi. 30 is to be so construed that it is Ebal and Gerizim which are described as *over against Gilgal*, this Gilgal was the present Julêjîl (cf. Schlatter, *Zur Topogr.* pp. 246 ff. 274; Buhl, *Geog.* p. 202).

P. 292. — Van Kasteren, *Z.D.P.V.* xiii. 101, suggests for Laishah, 'Isawiye.'

P. 340, lines 12, 13.—Carmel was a retreat for Elijah, 2 Kings i. 9; for Elisha, *ib.* ii. 25, iv. 25; for fugitives, Amos ix. 3.

P. 347, note 7.—Germer-Durand, in an article 'Epigraphie Palestinienne' in the *Revue Biblique Trimestrielle*, iii. 1894, pp. 248 ff., gives account of an inscription discovered in Sebastiyeh, which is dated from the fifteenth year of the rebuilding of the city.

Pp. 350 and 401, The position of Aphek in Sharon.—For this we have now the following evidence, which I have already published in a review of Buhl's *Geog.* in *Expositor* for Dec. 1896. In the lists of Thothmes III. of his conquest in Palestine, No. 66, is Apukn. It is preceded by Joppa, Lydda, and Ono, and followed by Suḳa (67) and Yhm (68). Yhm is where Thothmes had to decide which of three roads he would take over Carmel; it lay therefore south of the W. 'Abu Nar and may have been Yemma. Suka is the present Shuweikeh, two miles further south, and Apuḳn (which Max Müller, *Asien u. Europa*, p. 161, says may be read Apuḳi) lay between it and Ono at the mouth of Ajalon. A fragment of Esarhaddon (681-668 B.C.) gives a city Apḳu as thirty Kasbu-Ḳaḳḳa (according to Schrader 'double leagues') from Raphia, from which it would be natural to measure a place on Sharon (though Schrader, *K.A.T.*[2], p. 204, takes Apḳu to be the present Fik, on the east of the Lake of Galilee). Again Josephus, ii. *Wars*, xix. 1, mentions a 'Tower of Aphek' (Πύργος 'Αφεκοῦ), to drive the Jews out of which Cestius Gallus, after reaching Antipatris from Cæsarea, 'sent before' a party, and then, after taking it, he marched on Lydda. This agrees with data of Thothmes, and implies an Aphek between the river 'Aujeh and Lydda. No place-name can now be found with an unmistakable echo of the old name, but two may be noted. There is a Fejjeh or Feggeh, nine miles north-east of Joppa, which, however, does not lie near enough to the east limit of the plain to suit Lucian's text of 2 Kings xiii. 22: *Hazael took the Philistine from his hand from the western sea to Aphek.* In a list of mediæval Arab place-names about Cæsarea quoted by Röhricht, *Z.D.P.V.*, 1896, there occur a Sair Fuḳa and a Faḳin.

P. 351, note 2.—With Baal-Shalisha cf. the Baith-sarisa of Eusebius, thirteen Roman miles west of Lydda and Shalisha, 1 Sam. ix. 4.

P. 351, note 3.—Buhl (p. 170) identifies the former with Thamna (cf. 1 Macc. ix. 50) and with the modern Tibne.

P. 356.—In *Revue Illustrée de la Terre Sainte*, 1894, A. Raboisson discusses 'La Véracité du Livre Judith : ii. Discussion Historique d'après les documents Assyriens.'

P. 367.—Cf. Schlatter, *Zur Topographie*, etc., 268 ff.

P. 373 f., The water of the Well of Jacob.—All who are interested in the question, why the 'Woman of Samaria' sought water at the Well of Jacob, while the valley has so many open streams, will feel indebted for the following very valuable note, kindly sent me by Dr. H. J. Bailey of Bishopstoke, near Southampton, who resided in Nablus, as medical missionary, for over two years :—

'Apart from the sacred character of the Well, its waters have a great local reputation for purity and flavour among the natives of El 'Askar and Nablus. The excellence of various supplies of water, and their respective qualities, are a favourite topic of conversation with Easterns, and in a hot climate, and where other beverages are almost unknown, it is not surprising to find that the natives are great connoisseurs as to the quality of water. . . . The numerous springs of water at Nablus are, from the nature of the soil, mostly of very hard water, very "heavy," as the natives express it. They not unjustly attribute many of their complaints to this cause, and speak with longing of the "light" waters of Gaza and other places. Now Jacob's Well has a reputation among them of containing cool, palatable, and refreshing water, free from the deleterious qualities of their other supplies. Frequently I have been told that, after eating a hearty meal (and a hearty meal with them is something appalling), a good draught of this water will disperse the feeling of abnormal fulness in a remarkably short space of time, and, moreover, make one ready for another good meal. The copious fountain at El 'Askar gushes from the very bowels of rocky Mount Ebal (limestone) and is of particularly hard or "heavy" water. The woman would, therefore, gladly take her jar to the celebrated Well [of Jacob] for a supply of drinking water.

'Although 30 feet or more of rubbish has found its way into Jacob's Well, the supply of water, even now, lasts till the month of May, most years, and even later. The source of supply to this well has not yet been accurately ascertained, but it is doubtless greatly due to the percolation of the rainfall. The latter may account for some of its special quality of "lightness" (softness).

'It is not uncommon in the East to send to a great distance for a supply of drinking water, especially among those who can afford to do so. The Woman of Samaria may, if poor, have been hired to carry the water for some richer person. When at Nablus I used to send to a certain spring some miles or so from my house for drinking water, and soon quite a regular little cavalcade repaired to this spring every morning and evening to supply the richer families with water which the English doctor recommended. Bishop Blyth of Jerusalem sends three miles from Jerusalem to 'Ain Karîm for his water supply.'

P. 381, Gilboa.—The modern name is Fuḳua, but the ancient name is preserved in Jelbôn, a village on the hill.

Pp. 387-8, note on Megiddo.—Buhl (pp. 209 f.) agrees with the site at Lejjun. In the Amarna tablets Magidda or Makida. Raumer (*Pal.* 3, p. 402, quoted by Buhl) identifies Lejjun with Maximianopolis.

P. 414, note 4.—Buhl (p. 73) agrees with Schürer.

P. 441, note 2.—The first trustworthy statistics on the meteorology of the Lake of Galilee are given by Mr. Glaisher, *P.E.F.Q.*, 1896, p. 92: 'Results of Meteorological Observations taken at Tiberias under the direction of Dr. Torrance, 1890.' The mean monthly temperature varied from 51° in January to 90° in August. The lowest temperature was 34°·3 in January; the highest 111° in September. The mean daily range varied from 13°·5 in December to 28°·3 in May. In England the greatest difference in the barometer between 8 A.M. and 4 P.M. is in June, 0·025 in.; but the mean for the year at Tiberias was 0·081, or almost four times as great. On 87 days between May 4th and November 1st inclusive, and counting every day in August, the temperature was above 100° Fahr. The mean of the high day temperatures for the year was 85°, while at Jerusalem only 72°·6. The mean temperature was 74°, at Jerusalem 63°·2. The rainfall for 11 months 22·38 in.; while in Jerusalem, 23·92.

P. 442, note 5.—But, in *P.E.F.Q.*, 1892, 211 ff., Th. Barrois, after giving a history of all previous attempts to fathom the lake, records his own results, viz. that the depth scarcely exceeds 40 to 45 metres according to the season; the greatest depths being found on the axis of the Jordan, and almost on the meridian of the lake; the eastern side is the steeper. M. Barrois holds that if Lartet's figure of 250 metres is correct it must be due to a sudden fissure.

P. 443, note 1.—Wellhausen, *Gesch.* p. 220, derives the name from גיא and נסר, by which Galilee is to be understood, the form Gennesaret to be explained as due to Kinnereth. Buhl (pp. 113 u. 229) prefers גַּן, garden, the lake taking its name from the district of Gennesaret. Schürer, *Theol. Lit. Zeit.* March 2, 1895, supports גַּן on account of the Greek form of the name, and points out that the best reading in the only passage of the Mishna in which the name occurs, Maaseroth iii. 7, is גניסר, which is pointed by the *cod. de Rossi*, 138, גִּנֵּיסַר.

P. 450, note 2.—'Αμμαθους, not 'Αμμαους, is the right reading in Jos. xviii. *Ant.* ii. 3, and iv. *Wars*, i. 3. See Niese.

P. 455.—Magdala. Mark viii. 10 gives Dalmanutha. In the Talmud (cf. Neubauer) there are various Magdalas, or Migdals. One lay a Sabbath day's journey from Tiberias, therefore nearer the latter than Mejdel, and Buhl thinks south of Tiberias itself. Perhaps it was Megdal Minya. There was also a Migdal Ṣebo'ayya; cf. Buhl, pp. 225-6.

P. 456-7, note 2.—In face of this evidence and list of authorities, Buhl's statement is too strong that in Tell-hum, 'sucht man jetzt allgemein das N. T. Kapernaum' (p. 224). Buhl prefers Tell-hum chiefly on the statement of Theodosius that the fountain Heptapegon (which Buhl takes to have been the 'Ain

et Tabigha) was two Roman miles from Capernaum. Failing the testimony of Theodosius he thinks 'Ain et Tabighah would suit best. He lays no stress on the statements of Arculf. Kirchhoff (*Peterm. Mitth.*, 1895, p. 10) also supports Tell-Hum.

P. 458, One Bethsaida, not two.—Buhl reaches the same conclusions on the same evidence; but pertinently adds that the native town Bethsaida need not have been the same as the half-heathen Julias, which Jesus would hardly have entered, but was probably the port of the latter; he quotes Schumacher's statement (*Z.D.P.V.* ix. 319) that Bethsaida may have been identical with the ruins on the sea called El-'Araj, and connected with Et-Tell, the site of Julias, by a fine street. But see Jos. xviii. *Ant.* ii. 1.

P. 459, lines 6-8, Hippos and Kula'at el Hösn.—More probably Kula'at el Hösn is Hippos itself, with Aphek, now Fîk, near, as described by Eusebius. Jos. locates it on east coast of Lake, 30 stadii from Tiberias (xiv. *Ant.* iv. 4; xv. *Ant.* vii. 3; xvii. *Ant.* xi. 4; ii. *Wars*, xviii. 1, 5; *Life*, 9. 65). The name Susiye is properly of the plain south of the gorge: 'Ard Susiye. Gamala is placed by Van Kasteren, *Z.D.P.V.* xiii. 215 ff., as previously by Furrer, *ib.* ii. 149 f., in Jamli on the Rukkad. But see against this Schumacher, *Id.* xv. 175, who himself suggests El Ehsun (*N. 'Ajlun*, p. 116).

P. 480.—Buhl does not think my argument for Paneas=Dan sufficient, and holds to the old opinion that Tell-el-Kadi is Dan. There remain, however, the military difficulties, and the phrase (Deut. xxxiii. 22), *Dan leapeth from Bashan*, which suits Baneas but not Tell-el-Kadi.

P. 488.—On Adam, Zarthan, etc., see *P.E.F.Q.*, 1895, for papers by Watson (p. 253) on stoppage of the River Jordan, A.D. 1267, Dalton (p. 334) Stevenson (*ib.*); and *P.E.F.Q.*, 1896, for papers by Stevenson (p. 82) and especially Clermont-Ganneau (pp. 79 f).

P. 502, note 2.—Lartet reports the discovery of microbes of Tetanus and other pathogenic forms in the mud of the Dead Sea. *P.E.F.Q.*, 1892, pp. 48 ff.

P. 512.—On Masada see Tuch 'Masada, die Herodianische Felsenfeste, nach Fl. Josephus u. neueren Beobachtern' (*Reformationsfest*, 1863).

P. 513, The Position of the Cities of the Plain.—Buhl (*Geog.* p. 271) favours the identification of the Zo'ar of Genesis and Deut. with the Zo'ar of the Moslem period, at the south end of the Dead Sea, and pertinently points out that the Biblical city could not have lain at the north-east corner of the sea, because, while it is given as a Moabite town (Isa. xv. 51; Jer. xlviii. 34), it nowhere appears in the lists of cities belonging to Israel. He also notes that, according to Ezekiel xvi. 46, Sodom lay south of Judah.

P. 541, Gaulanitis.—Josephus seems to use the name for all the country north of Yarmuk, where he describes Og as King of Gaulanitis and Galaaditis (iv. *Ant.* v. 3). If Solyma (*Life*, 37) be the Salem of to-day that would carry the name east as far as the Jebel Druz. But again Josephus distinguishes Gaulanitis from Hippene and Gamalitis, iii. *Wars*, iii. 1, 5.

P. 551, Argob and Havoth Jair.—Buhl (pp. 118-119) equally rejects the identification of these as due to a confusion. He suggests for Argob the

district Suwet, where, according to Wetzstein, there are the ruins of 300 towns. See also Driver, *Deuteronomy*, pp. 48 f.

P. 552.—Haurân appears in an inscription of Salmanassar II.; cf. Winckler *Keilinschrift Handbuch z. A.T.*, 10 f. In the Mishna, Haurân is a mountain (Neubauer, *Géog. du Talmud*, p. 426).

557, note 2.—Buhl suggests a tributary of the W. Kerak; cf. Driver on Deut. xi. 13.

P. 568, note 5.—Add the following: De Vogué, *Le Temple de Jerusalem*, pp. 37-42, pl. xxxiv, xxxv. De Saulcy, *Voyage en Terre Sainte*, i. p. 211 f.; Duc de Luynes's *Voyage d'exploration à la Mer Morte*, pl. 30-33; *P.E.F.M.*, *E. Palestine*, i. p. 65-87; Gautier, *Au Delà du Jourdain*, pp. 50 ff.

P. 580, note 5.—Khurbet Istib, south of W. Yabis, where there is a ruined chapel, Mâr Elyâs; cf. Van Kasteren, *Z.D.P.V.* xiii. 207.

P. 586, note 2.—For the Bithron Buhl (p. 121) suggests W. 'Ajlun, up which later a Roman road ran from 'Ajlun towards Mahanaim. He would, therefore, not seek Cherith here.

P. 587, Es-Salt.—Schlatter, *Zur Topog.* 44 ff., proposes to identify Es-Salt, in which a well bears the name Jedur or Jador, with the Gadara given by Josephus as the capital of Peræa (iv. *Wars*, vii. 3), and to be distinguished, therefore, from Gadara on the Jarmuk. This northern Gadara he takes to be the same as that captured by Antiochus the Great in 218, and again in 198, and by Alex. Jannæus (Polyb. v. 271, Josephus xii. *Ant.* iii. 3, xiii. *Ant.* xiii. 3; i. *Wars*, iv. 2). This is improbable, at least in the case of Alex. Jannæus, for Pompey's enfranchisement of the Gadara on the Jarmuk implies a previous Jewish conquest of it. Farther, Schlatter identifies the S. Gadara with the Gadora of Ptolemy and the Gedôr of the Talmud (See Neubauer). Buhl approves (p. 255 *n.*).

P. 587, Ramoth-Gilead.—Buhl (p. 262) prefers the identification with the ruins El Jala'ad, not quite three miles south of Jabbok, partly on the ground that this site suits the data of Eusebius, who places Ramoth, fifteen Roman miles west of Philadelphia, on Jabbok. He would also identify it with the town of Gilead, Hos. vi. 8; cf. Jud. xii. 7, LXX Cod. Alex. and Lag. Strong reasons against the identification of Ramoth-Gilead with Es-Salt are given by Rev. G. A. Cooke, Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, who visited Es-Salt in 1894. He points out that the references to Ramoth-Gilead in the Old Testament show that it must have been a place of administrative and strategic importance with respect to Bashan on the one hand (1 Kings iv. 13) and Syria and North Israel on the other (1 Kings xxii. 3 ff.), accessible from Samaria and Jezreel by road (1 Kings xxii. 37, 2 Kings viii. 28 f., ix. 16); it must have lain consequently north, and indeed considerably north, of the Jabbok; its environs, also, were convenient for chariot warfare (1 Kings xxii. 31 ff.), while those of Es-Salt are certainly not so. This important evidence for that northern site for Ramoth-Gilead, which I have suggested on pp. 587 f. and 602, is most welcome. It will be found at greater length in the 'Addenda and Corrigenda' to the Second Edition of Canon Driver's *Deuteronomy*, p. xx.

P. 587, Irbid.—Raboisson (*Rev. Illus. de la Terre Sainte*, 1894) suggests identification with the Laribda, as if El Irbid, of Assurbanipal's campaign.

P. 598.—In the Talmud Pella is called Paḥil or Paḥel, a form which connects it with the modern Faḥil.

P. 599, note 1.—For the site of Raphon Buhl (p. 250) suggests Tell-esh-Shehâb in the Wadi of that name, where there are remains of important fortifications. He also suggests that Capitolias was Raphon. Wetzstein had already suggested that Capitolias and Karnaim were the same.

P. 617, note 1.—Schürer (*Theol. Literaturzeitung*, March 2, 1895) holds the existence of an earlier Malchus (inferred by Gutschmid from a coin) as problematical.

P. 624, note 1.—See papers in *P.E.F.Q.*, 1895, by A. G. Wright, on the Roman Provinces of Syria and Arabia, with boundary lines, list of places, etc. In Umm el Jumâl, about 16 miles SSW. of Bostra, there is an inscription of the Roman frontier: Wadd. 2057*a*, 2057*b*, *M.u.N.D.P.V.*, 1896, 49-50; Robinson Lees, *Geographical Journal*, 1895, v. 19.

Pp. 634 f.—In this Fourth Edition I have modified the strong contrast which I had previously drawn between Pagan and Christian epitaphs on the east of Jordan. I had taken *οὐδεὶς ἀθάνατος* as meaning 'nobody is immortal,' and as occurring only upon Pagan tomb-stones. Prof. Ramsay (*Expositor*, Jan. 1895, pp. 58 f.) brings forward reasons for doubting both of these conclusions. He thinks that the phrase probably means only 'no one is free from death,' and maintains that most of the instances of its use are clearly Christian (*e.g.* Wadd. 1897, 1986, 2459, and perhaps *ibid.* 2032, 2050, and Ewing 163). In the *Academy* for Jan. 19th, 1895, Mr. W. E. Crum cites four Coptic tombstones with a parallel phrase: 'there is not any deathless.' Both Prof. Ramsay and Mr. Crum think it probable that the phrase was borrowed from Pagans by Christians. (Revillout, with only one tombstone of the kind before him, had previously, as Mr. Crum says, called the phrase 'essentiellement matérialiste et syrienne.') As Prof. Ramsay remarks: 'The line of demarcation between Christian and non-Christian epitaphs is a very delicate one,' and in face of the evidence presented by himself and Mr. Crum I cannot but feel that the distinction I drew was too strong. All the same, as I have indicated, the Roman epitaphs seem entirely without hope; the Greek are at the best ambiguous; the Christian probably put a new meaning into the phrases they borrowed from the Pagans; and they do contain certain positive elements of which the Pagan are devoid. The whole matter is in need of further discussion.—Further, Prof. Ramsay takes *καὶ σύ* as the reply of the deceased to the greeting, as in the fuller form, *χαῖρε· χαῖρε καὶ σύ*: and *τελευτάω*, as probably meaning only to die, though such a use was regular only from the fifth century down. He therefore takes the second *χαῖρε*, in the inscription of Titus son of Malchus, as the reply of the deceased to the first *χαῖρε*. On the analogy of the common formula, *ὁ βίος ταῦτα*, Life is—this, he prefers to read the inscription on the Irbid tomb, *μετὰ πάντα τα(ῦτα)*, After all—this, to reading it as I have done, Μετὰ Πάντα τά(φος).

Pp. 645-7, Bibliography of Eastern Palestine.—To be added: Robinson Lees, in the *Geographical Journal* for 1895; cf. Kiepert in *M.u.N.D.P.V.*, 1895, 24 ff.; Schumacher, *Z.D.P.V.*, 1895, on Es-Salt, 65 ff, Madaba, 113 ff., Dscherasch, 126 ff.; cf. Schumacher's 'Inschriften aus Dscherasch,' *ibid.* 141. Prof. R. Brunnow, 'Reisebericht,' in *M.u.N.D.P.V.*, 1895, 65 ff. 81; 1896, p. 1, with photographs. 'Ein Fusstour in Ostjordanland,' in *Die Warte des Tempels*, 1895, repeated in *M.u.N.D.P.V.*, 1896, p. 33. 'Eine Reise nach dem Ostjordanland,' in *Der Bote aus Zion*, 1895, 33 ff. Professor L. Gautier of Lausanne, *Au-delà du Jourdain.*

In *P.E.F.Q.* for 1895, 'Narrative of Expedition to Moab and Gilead,' by F. J. Bliss; cf. 'Inscriptions collected in Moab by F. J. Bliss,' with notes by A. S. Murray, pp. 371 f. 'A Journey in Hauran,' by Rev. W. Ewing; cf. 'Greek and other Inscriptions collected in Hauran by Rev. W. Ewing,' edited by A. G. Wright and A. Souter; also A. G. Wright on 'The Roman Provinces of Syria and Arabia.' In *P.E.F.Q.*, 1896, 'A Journey East of Jordan and Dead Sea,' by Gray Hill.

P. 668, on fourth paragraph.—The oldest Roman milestone discovered in Palestine is one of Hadrian's. See Clermont-Ganneau, 'Une Inscription Romaine de Bettir,' *Comptes Rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres*, 1894.

P. 668, on fifth paragraph.—Another Arab milestone of the same Khalif has been found near Bab el Wad, on the Roman road from Jerusalem to the coast. See De Vogué and Clermont-Ganneau, *Comptes Rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres*, 1894, 27 ff. and 259 f. In the *Revue Biblique*, iii. 1894, pp. 136 ff. Lagrange argues, but not conclusively, for the length of the Arab mile as 2500 metres. See also on this paragraph, Arculf, A.D. 700, p. 7 in Bohn's *Early Travels.*

P. 670, on note on p. 159.—Cf. *P.E.F.Q.*, 1893, 294 (with note by Clermont-Ganneau on p. 306), a paper by Schick on Baron Ustinoff's collection of antiquities in Jaffa, with 'Remarks on Facsimile of Metal Mouse' in that collection, by Thomas, *P.E.F.Q.*, 1894, 189. On the mortality of rats in a part of Bombay, in which the plague broke out (and which is chiefly inhabited by grain dealers), see a report by Drs. Child and Surveyor in the *British Medical Journal* for week ending Nov. 7, 1896. I am indebted to Rev. T. G. Selby for this reference.

P. 670, on note on pp. 279-280.—Cf. Muss Arnolt on 'Kiriath Sepher, Kiriath Sannah and Debir,' in the *Christian Intelligencer*, New York, 17th February 1892.

Note on the Railways.—The railway from Beyrout to Damascus and that from Damascus to Muzeirib are open. The company who are constructing the railway from Haifa to Damascus have, I understand, been conceded a further period of three years for completing the work. For a general account of Syrian railways see *Z.D.P.V.* xvii. 36 ff., M. Hartmann, 'Das Bahnnetz Mittel-Syriens.'



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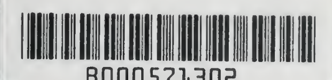











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